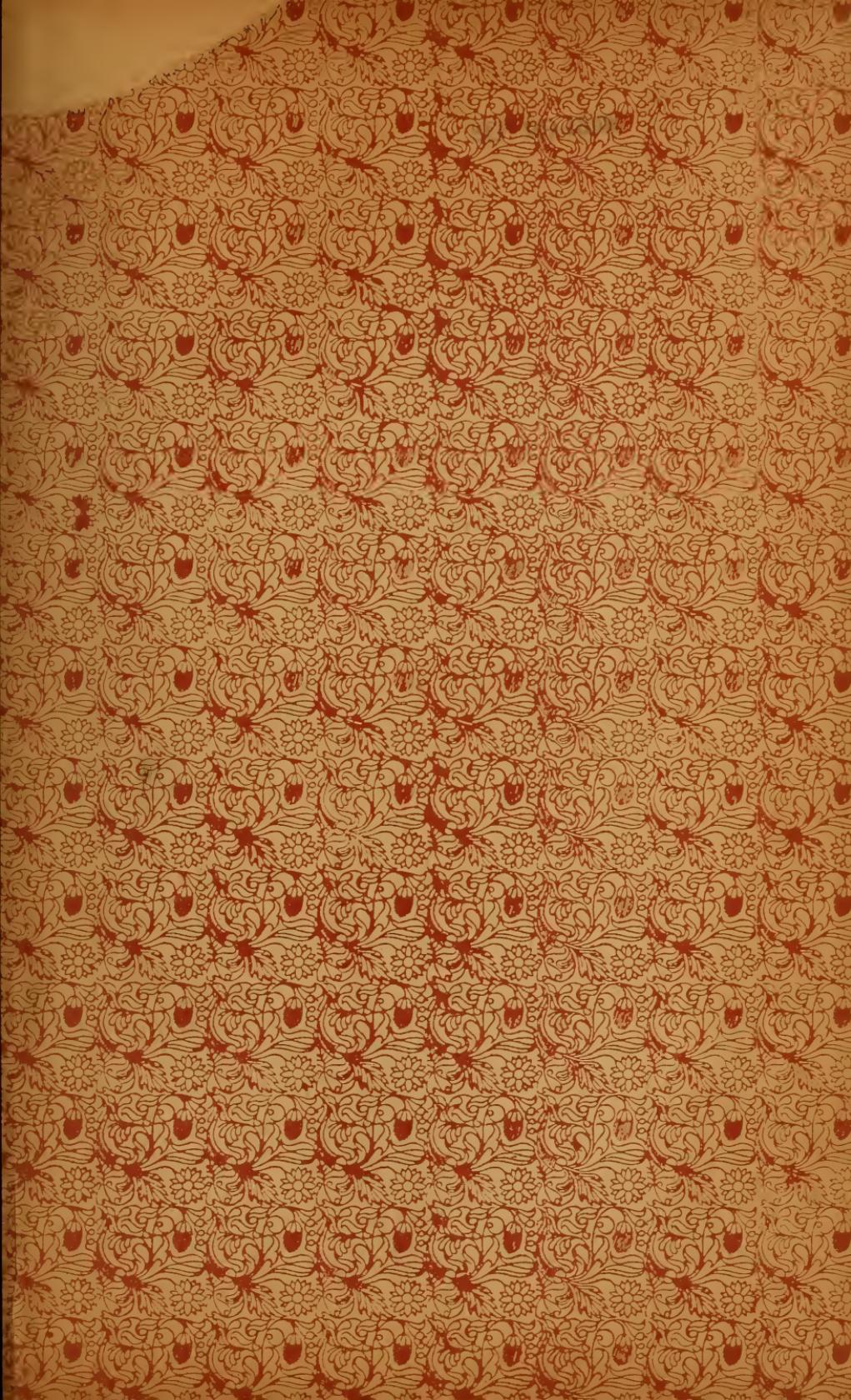


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

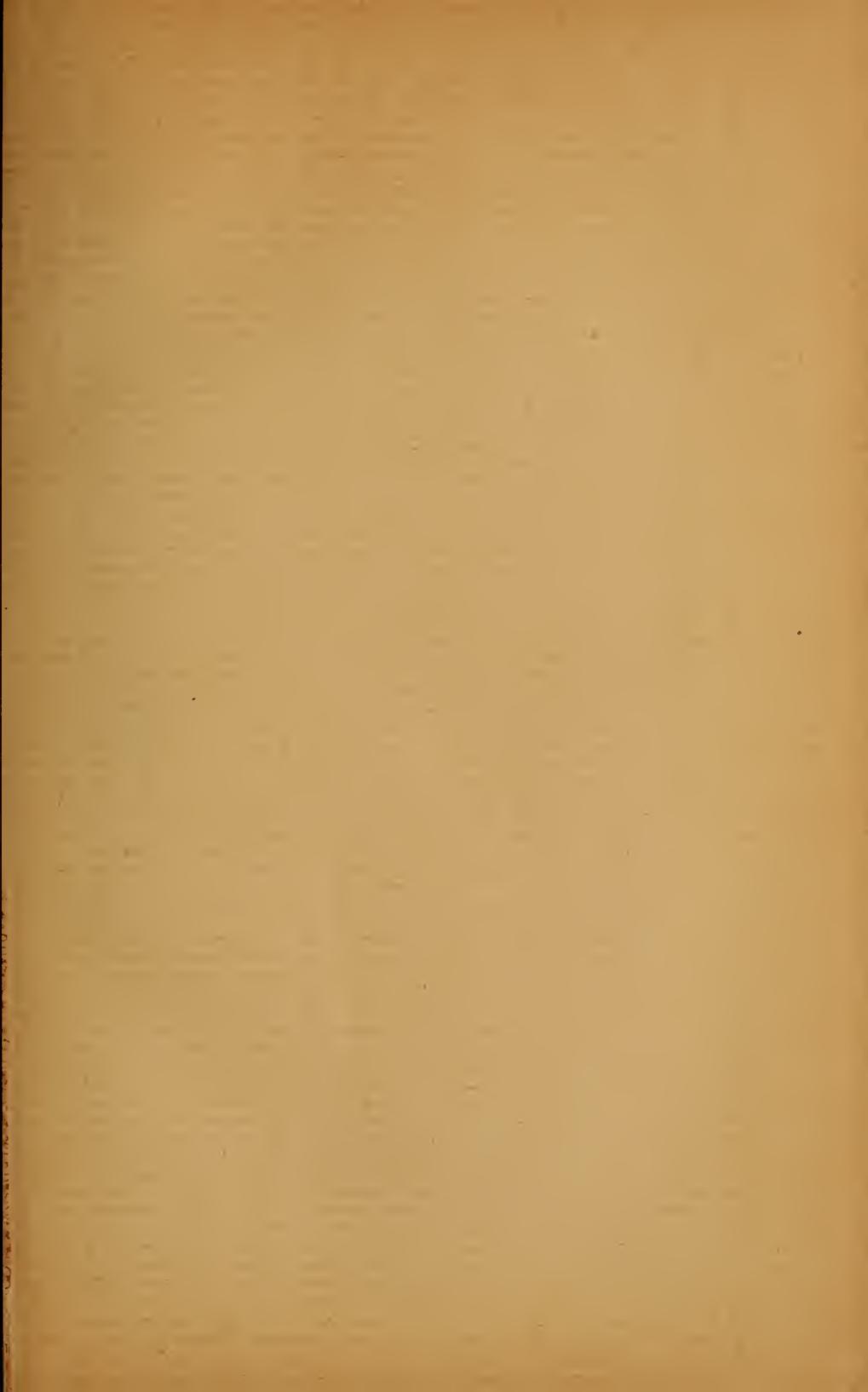
BT265
Chap. _____ Copyright No. T 33

Shelf _____

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







SEP 29 1898



THE
BLOODY SACRIFICE.

BY REV. E^M W. THAYER.
||
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

1898.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.:
H. W. Rokker Company Publishing House.
1898.

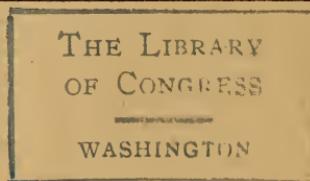
B T265
T33

22505

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1898, by

REV. E. W. THAYER,

In the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C.



#2

35586

June 10 98

1 copy recd June 25 - 98

1 copy Recd Sep 29 98

P R E F A C E.

The present treatise is not a learned discussion of the great subject of atonement; it is simply a scripture interpretation. No attempt is in it made to formulate logical propositions, or to consult human reason; but simply to collate the unquestioned and unquestionable teachings of the word of God for the benefit of seekers after truth. The subject is of the highest importance, and at present demands persistent indoctrination, as the tendency is lamentably verging towards an oversight or ignoring of the expiatory character of his death. A denial of the sacrificial view of his decease is fatal to the system of Christianity itself, as it withdraws the great motive force which should actuate, and does constrain the believing soul to loving consecration and untiring service. Were the doctrine of vicarious atonement eliminated from the creed of the church, nothing would be left but a beautiful system of morality; destitute of power to enforce itself and

therefore wholly impracticable. Deprived of this spiritual force Christianity would have little more influence over the life, than any other system of approved philosophy. This doctrine of vicarious atonement is the corner stone and foundation of the whole system of Christianity, and may well be termed "*articulus stantis vel caden tis ecclesiae*," as Luther described faith in a crucified Savior to be. No contribution is of more intrinsic value than one which throws a real light upon the inspired word, and settles its undoubted meaning. If this result has been attained in any degree in these pages, it will be a sufficient reward for all the labor expended upon them. A word is required respecting the desultory character of the work: it is a supplement to a volume issued in 1891; and this accounts for its desultoriness, and no further excuse is needed. The volume referred to is entitled, "Sketches from the Life of Jesus, Historical and Doctrinal."

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The Bloody Sacrifice, its Origin and Early History	1
Necessity of Atonement.....	19
The Fall of Adam, and Provision of a Redeemer.....	34
Jesus of Nazareth, the Man.....	53
Jesus Christ, the God.....	73
Rejection and Death of Jesus.....	91
Atonement.....	113
The Resurrection of Jesus.....	127
The Resurrection, the Witnesses	144
The Resurrection of Jesus, the Vision Theory Examined.....	167

CHAPTER I.

THE BLOODY SACRIFICE, ITS ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY.

The first act of religious worship reported in the word of God, not the first actually, for worship had been definitely instituted long before, is the offering of Cain and Abel. The occasion was probably the day when each became the head of a separate household; the father always assuming the duty of officiating in his own house. The place of sacrifice was the spot where "the presence of the Lord" was; at the eastward of Eden, before the flaming sword waving without hand between the cherubim and representing the divinity, whose infinite attributes are concentrated in the fiery justice, which cuts off all approach of sinners to communion with the Holy Jehovah. The offering of the two brothers may not have been simultaneous, time probably intervening.

Cain brought the offering which Adam in his state of innocence had been accustomed to bring, signifying an entire dependence upon God for the fruits of the soil, and acknowledging a responsive gratitude to the great giver. This had often been accepted as the proper worship of the Most High, corresponding to the wave offering of the Jews, required before men were at liberty to use the fruits of the soil, God signifying in some way not revealed to us his acceptance of the offering, not by fire probably. The Lord had no respect to the offering, however beautifully arranged, and made no manifestation of approval, which seems to have been a sore disappointment to Cain.

Abel on the other hand, when it became his duty to officiate as head of a new household, conformed to the institution established later. God demanded the sacrifice of a life. Among the animals to which man was most attached was the lamb, peculiarly fitted for the ceremony, created for it, and especially designated probably. Abel brought from the firstlings of the flock the choicest, the perfect one. That it was brought as a sin-offering we are assured by God himself in Gen. iv:7: "If thou doest not well sin lieth at the door," which according to the rules of Hebrew grammar should have been translated, the animal for a sin-offering lieth at the door. The word "chattauth," when it means sin or sin-offering, is always of the feminine gender.

The word "chattauth" occurs two hundred and ninety-three times in the Hebrew scriptures; but in this single instance only as a masculine noun, and

must denote the animal for a sin-offering, necessarily a male; indeed, the genius of the Hebrew language requires that "chattauth" wherever it has the signification of sin or a sin-offering should be of the feminine gender. It can be of the masculine gender only when it stands for one of that sex; the only conceivable reason for this extraordinary change of gender being that it designates a male animal.

"Robets" also is never used to express the crouching of a beast in order to spring; but its lying down for repose. A wholly different word expresses the act of crouching.

This change of version suggested, (the animal for sacrifice is lying at the door) if allowed, as it must be, teaches that this bloody ceremony is in no sense of man's devising, and asserts the very contrary. If God counselled Cain to offer a lamb as Abel had done, it follows that HE had instituted the ordinance. The time when this ceremony had been established as accompanying all acceptable worship of the just and holy Jehovah, had probably been the time of the promise of a deliverer from the ruin wrought by the fall. The seed of the woman, who should crush the serpent's head, should achieve his victory at the sacrifice of his own mortal life.

The various steps to be taken in order to an acceptable offering were detailed at that time, the selection of a perfect animal, the imposition of hands while sin was being confessed, the slaughter

of the animal, the catching of its blood, the casting of its flesh into the sacred fire, and the offering of its blood.

Abel then laying his hand upon the head of his lamb confessed in words equivalent: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." "The heart," the seat of character, "is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" "Can the leopard change his spots?" so have I been unable to do the right I would; the evil that I would not I have done continually. "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." "Without faith it is impossible to please thee," "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief."

Confessing that the firey sword might justly destroy his life already forfeited, and praying that God would accept instead the life he was offering, he smote and killed the unresisting lamb, carefully catching its gushing blood. The skin was soon stripped from its lifeless body, which was laid upon the wood of the altar, on which he also poured the blood. This offering of the flesh and blood of the lamb God immediately accepted. Fire came out from before the Lord, by which may be understood that a flash of lightning from the seat of the divine presence, perhaps from the flaming sword, an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty, struck; not the

kneeling penitent, but the substituted victim, on whose head sin had been laid, and kindled the wood consuming the sacrifice.

This lightning represented the instantaneous, summary and condign vengeance of Almighty God, which he will visit upon transgressors. The fierceness of his wrath against sin is represented by the fiercest passion of the human soul, revenge. The flame was not kindled on every altar by fire from heaven, but this fire was not suffered to go out; and no other could be used in the solemnities of the altar. Strange fire cost the daring innovators their lives. It was as though every lamb, ever laid upon the altars during the ages of patriarchal and priestly service, had been consumed by lightning darted from the skies at every single sacrifice.

By this ordinance "was revealed from heaven the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." This heaven-kindled flame, the fire of God, afterwards became the unquenchable fire of the Jewish altar. Its kindling is related in Lev. ix:24, and again at the dedication of Solomon's temple. It burned at each lighting for centuries unextinguished, an emblem of eternal burnings.

That this bloody sacrifice was required to be made frequently, perhaps weekly, perhaps daily, appears from the coats of skies supplied to Adam and Eve for clothing, animals not being slaughtered for food until after the deluge. These must have been

the skins of beasts used for sacrifice, and their use by our first parents indicates the approach of the first winter in their experience.

Repentance, confession and faith were the condition of pardon then, and have continued to be the condition ever since. Abel did not know how God could consistently forgive sin; but he believed, as Paul asserts (Heb. 11:4), that God himself would in the future make a bloody offering of virtue sufficient to atone for the sins of the world. This ceremony of bloody sacrifice has accompanied all acceptable worship ever since, with variations and amplifications in the passover and day of atonement ceremonies of the Jews. "Without shedding of blood" without the offering of a life "is no remission" is the unqualified testimony of all the rites imposed upon patriarchs and Jews.

The doctrines of the imputation of sin and vicarious suffering by substitution of a victim, are as old as the promise of a Savior. In this ceremony lay concealed all the secrets of the divine administration, and every particular enjoined by heaven's authority has afforded light, edification and instruction to some of the greatest minds that ever lived, and should not be overlooked and slighted by the church of to-day.

It was plain to the feeblest understanding that the life of a dumb animal was no adequate substitute for a human life, and that the blood of bulls and of goats could never take away sin; and therefore that the offered victim was but a representative of a higher and nobler sacrifice. It was

thus a matter of easy inference that the bloody offering represented the process by which the mighty deliverer predicted should conquer the great enemy of the race, release his captives and undo the ruin of the fall.

The memory of this expected deliverer is perpetuated in all the mythologies of the ancient world; a divine character is assigned to him, while he is yet human, showing the ancient interpretation put upon the words of promise. Indeed the words of Eve when Cain was born may be translated: "I have gotten the man, the Jehovah," and are just as correctly translated thus as: "I have gotten a man from the Lord," the word "from" not being found in the original.

If the word "chattauth" is thus understood, all the great facts of the gospel, all that was essential to be known in order to salvation, were in the possession of the progenitors of the race as fully as in ours, the divinity of the Redeemer, his conquest of satan, and his taking away the sins of the world by becoming the victim of a bloody sacrifice, and the possibility of salvation by faith in him, proved to be genuine and hearty by full confession of sin, and true repentance for it.

Our first parents knew much more perhaps than is contained in the recorded history. Their knowledge of the evil of sin, and its dire results in this world as well as in the future, were much more affecting than that furnished by our experience; and their understanding of the possibility of pardon and

deliverance was as inspiring, though they knew less of the manner in which the deliverance was to be secured.

The heathen world retained the tradition of a mighty deliverer better preserved than the character of the work by which he would secure deliverance.

While bloody sacrifices prevailed among all the nations of antiquity, the significance of the rite was almost entirely lost; they only supposed heaven propitiated by it; and on extraordinary occasions made human sacrifices under the impression that the more costly the offering, the greater its virtue in placating their gods. They lost the memory of the attendant religious exercises the confession of sin, the imposition of hands, the substitution of the victim in the place of the penitent transgressor; in short they dropped out of their program all that related to a sense of guilt and ill desert.

Only such as were spiritually enlightened on these themes so uncongenial to the natural man could profit by the service, or understandingly preserve and perpetuate it. To nothing is man more averse than to a conviction of sinfulness in the scripture sense, and it is not wonderful that the meaning of the sacrifice was lost: while the expectation of the Savior was counted the heirloom of the race, a hope not to be abandoned, to which the world clung with an increasing tenacity, as the accumulated miseries and strifes and injustice of human history aggravated the despair of the suffering

masses; no farther discovery on this most important of all subjects was vouchsafed until the time of Abraham.

The command of God to the patriarch to offer up his only and beloved son as a sacrifice is a confirmation of the opinion that the ceremony of sacrifice is a divine institution, or a direct assertion of the fact. The object of this strange requirement was to elucidate the full meaning of the bloody offering. Who can be expected to explain and define the significance of the ordinance except its author? Who else has the right to interpose a word? This additional light was granted in answer to fervent and persistent prayer, as the Savior said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham desired to see my day." The command was given in such manner as to leave no uncertainty as to its giver, or as to its meaning.

Instead of questioning whether a righteous God could command an act in itself sinful, or allowing doubts to trouble him, and without hesitation he set about obeying. He evidently felt misgivings as to whether Isaac would submit to the trying ordeal; for he gave him no intimation of the object of the journey, not even when the designated mountain was reached; but deferred the communication to the last moment, which probably was the wise course. It is pathetic to hear the lad's inquiry as laden with the wood he toiled up the Golgotha, which another Isaac in an after age would climb, laden with a cross; "my father, behold the fire and the

wood, but where is the lamb?" and to hear the father reply, with breaking heart, "the Lord will provide."

When informed at length of the divine requirement, and no time was left for hesitation, he consented, feeling the Lord's will be done; and thus showed that a degree of the Father's faith was in the heart of the boy, that he should so readily yield his life to the will of heaven. Their hearts beat in unison in this the supreme moment of their two lives.

Then followed the binding of the victim, and laying of the wood upon the altar, the solemn prayer of confession and consecration which always attended a sacrifice, made with souls convulsed, the fervent amen was spoken, and the arm was uplifted knife in hand; and in another instant the lifeblood would have spurted from the fatal gash, had not Abraham's arm been arrested by a voice from heaven. His firm intention was to slay his son; so that the Scripture says that he actually "offered up his only son."

God was virtually saying by this requirement, when the great transaction typified takes place, the victim will be no bleeding bird or bleeding beast; but as you have with agony untold bound and laid upon the altar the dearest object you possess; so God will give to agonies and death the one dearest to him in all the universe.

Impelled by a love that cannot be told in words of earth, God will lay upon the altar of justice the son, the darling of his delight. Men will be re-

deemed by the supremest effort, even agonies of the Godhead, not of the son only, the Father must have participated. The throne of heaven will feel the shock.

Abraham and the world were taught by this experience two things, first that the victim on that great day will be one that God alone can furnish, and next that God himself will be the priest. The name of this mountain shall be henceforth called Jehovah-jireh; that men may ever be reminded that God will furnish the lamb for the sacrifice; and of the mighty effort of the mightier love that atones for human guilt. This was an advance in the knowledge of God, as well as of the redeeming work; inasmuch as it conveyed the truth, that while God is one, there is a distinction of persons in the Godhead, and that the Redeemer to be will be God's only and his equal son.

The patriarch plainly saw the day of Christ and rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Was God at such outlay to illustrate and explain an ordinance of man's invention?

When the soul of a pardoned sinner is filled with a sense of the boundless mercy of Christ, and engrossed with the revelation of the extent of a Savior's forgiveness, that God, great in all his works, is greater in his forgiveness of sin, he is apt to look upon Jesus as the fountain of everlasting love; while the Father seems the embodiment of the stern and fearful attributes of immutable justice and truth. He seems invested with the clouds and terrors of Sinair, and his office to be to uphold and

enforce the fiery law. This is not an attractive view, and how unjust! This representation to Abraham places the whole thing in another light. The patriarch was made by a fearful experience to realize the struggle it cost to surrender to suffering and death an only and beloved son, and by this to judge of the strength of the love to men which led the Holy One to give his only begotten and beloved son for man's redemption. He not only gave his son he offered him up, which Abraham understood to be infinitely more grievous and severe. The Father deserves the love and trust and ineffable gratitude of men equally with the son, to say the least.

The distinction of persons in the Godhead was more clearly revealed as time progressed. An angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in human form in a burning bush on Mount Horeb, and announced himself as the "I am that I am;" proposing to him a mission to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from their cruel bondage. The bush, not a large and spreading tree, but a clump of clustering shrubs, represented Israel whom the fire of oppression could not destroy because God was with them. Two miracles of menace were required to overcome the reluctance of the disappointed, broken-spirited old man, whose life, grand in its beginning, had been a total failure. This word (broken-spirited) is the radical and primary meaning of the word translated (meek) in numbers xii:3.

The first miracle taught the lesson that duty performed was a staff to support, but neglected it becomes a venomous serpent to pursue. The second

lesson taught him was that his whole person was liable to be branded with the odious and incurable disease of leprosy, if he persisted in declining the call of God.

If he obeyed the summons God would help him; and if the strength of nature failed, divine strength should sustain him; "his eye should not wax dim, nor his natural force be abated" for forty years of additional service of the most wearing description; and in performing it, he should be blessed with closer approach to God and higher experiences of celestial bliss than any of the race of mortals. This was not all promised to him on Mount Horeb, but granted as occasion demanded.

This angel was the same who had appeared to Abraham at Mamre, and to Jacob at Peniel. Moses afterward talked with him face to face in the pillar of cloud. He showed himself to Joshua and to the whole congregation at Boeheim. He in person appointed the judges as is related in the cases of Gideon and Samson, and directed the administration of the government, until the rejection of the theocracy for a worldly monarchy, which terminated his personal appearances. He showed himself but once afterwards, and that was in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace after the fall of the monarchy.

He was the angel whom God sent in the pillar of cloud to lead the congregation to the land of Canaan. God said "my name is in him." Before him the sea had opened and swallowed their oppressors; and his anger excluded the unbelieving generation from the promised land. He is called

"the angel of the Lord;" Isaiah 63:10 calls him "the angel of the presence;" Malachi 3:1 calls him "the angel of the covenant." This august being is the great actor in the books of Moses, of Joshua, and of the Judges. In Proverbs 8th it is said, "His delights were with the children of men," he even loved "the habitable parts of the earth" where they would after dwell. He seemed to love to assume the human form on occasions which justified his personal presence. He was thus continually reminding the world of the great expected deliverer from the ruin of the fall, who though divine, should be in fashion as a man, and as the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head.

Prophecy had no other subject than him, inspiration sang only of him. He was for the most part very fully described as the rejected one, the despised one, the abhorred one, the suffering one, "the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." Three divine persons are spoken of in the early books, Jehovah God of hosts, the Angel Jehovah, and the Spirit Jehovah. The thought that this glorious angel Jehovah should become the sufferer in the place of sinful men, and submit to penal suffering for sinners, was too overwhelming to be entertained for a moment even by those most spiritually enlightened. Nor man nor angel durst in thought connect him with suffering or with sin. In this dilemma the fiction of two Messiahs, one suffering the other reigning, suggested itself, and found favor

and acceptance. It was an attempt to evade the connection of a divine person with the consequences of human guilt.

That men should be redeemed by the blood of Christ seems too wonderful to be believed, too good to be true, and yet too true to be rejected; and yet salvation is conditioned upon believing it with the heart.

The Mosaic institutions are confessedly of divine authority, and in them the sin-offering holds a place, a large place, a principal place, occasions for the ceremony being multiplied exceedingly. The fire on the Jewish altar never went out, and the blood never had time thoroughly to dry. The sin-offering of Eden was the groundwork of the whole system. The same truths, the substitution of a victim in the place of the sinner, and the imputation of sin were continually taught..

A step in advance was made in the institution of the passover. In Egypt on a memorable night every first-born of man and beast was doomed. In the Israelitish houses a lamb died in the place of the first born, and its blood on the besprinkled door secured not only immunity from the impending plague, but an endless succession of deliverances in the future, thus exhibiting the imputation of the merits of the blood, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

So the ceremonies of the day of atonement were a fuller representation of the same truths, more extensive, more complicated, but a divinely authorized expansion of the simple ceremony of the sin-offering.

The three ordinances are teaching—the first, the imputation of sin to a substitute for the sinner, another showing the imputation of the merits of the substitute to the sinful offerer, and the third describing that the victim after dying lives again to intercede. All rest on the same authority, and are divine institutions.

Further confirmation of its divine institution is derived from the fact that it stood for forty centuries unchanged as an object lesson to the world. It was the only acceptable worship of God from the offering of Abel down the whole course of time. It held the place of prominence in the Mosaic economy for fifteen hundred years. How terribly was the Mosaic system sustained and defended! Fifty thousand died for looking into the ark at the two tables of stone; one was struck dead in his tracks for touching it with good intent. In all the changes in worship made by David and Solomon incident to the building of the temple, not the least change in this sacrificial ceremony was attempted.

It retained its prescribed form from the time of Abel. It was the germ and the kernel of the whole system of worship. It contains an epitome of the conditions of salvation displayed to the eye. It shadowed forth typically the dire, immediate and dreadful judgments of God against sin and sinners.

The fire from heaven was an emblem of the wrath of God; his lightnings kindled the flame upon the altar which was unquenchable, consuming, burning for centuries, and representing his eternal justice, and the retributions of the future. The

vehement of his hatred of evil-doing, "the fierceness of his anger" was thus daily exhibited. He "will by no means clear the guilty," or he will allow no crime to go unavenged. His disapproval has in it an energy and persistence great as the uncreated nature can feel. The lightnings teach this first and chiefly. Sin had been laid on the head of the innocent victim, and it drew the fire of heaven immediately, an eternal fire. With such vengeance will God visit sin.

Another truth taught by the ordinance was that sin, though in its nature unpardonable, yet can by God's special provision be forgiven; but not without shedding of blood, not the blood of the sinner, however. God's altar ran all the time with the blood of innocence, and often was perfectly deluged with blood. Sin was continually confessed before it, and blood ran continually down it. The great doctrine of substitutionary punishment was continually proclaimed by it.

Guilt can never be transferred to a substitute; but punishment due to us can be endured by another without violating the first principles of equity. The lamb of the altar represented the Lamb of God. The blood of the Jewish lamb atoned typically; the blood of Jesus atones really.

All that is necessary for the salvation of the soul can be learned from this ordinance. It is plain from the Old Testament scriptures that all the doctrines of the new dispensation are contained as strongly in the first book of the Bible as they are

in the gospel documents. They were radically connected with this bloody rite as the trunk and branches of a tree are with its root.

Our earliest progenitors were as well informed of all that was necessary for their eternal salvation as we are, though they beheld the light through a veil, as it were. The strongest characters the world has seen were formed under such light as was gained from these emblems, of which the bloody sacrifice was the basis. A divine providence evidently guarded the ceremony, and prevented its modification in the slightest particular. The only modification being the substitution of the great brazen altar before the temple, no tool being used upon it, for the altar of the undressed rock; and that allowed by divine persuasion. This of itself is evidence of the divine institution of the ceremony.

CHAPTER II.

NECESSITY OF ATONEMENT.

Had men sinned in their own persons as did the angels which "kept not their first estate," God would never have permitted the offer of forgiveness and reconciliation to fall upon their guilty ears. A ransom is provided for men, and the offer of pardon is made to men, because they sinned in Adam, and inherit a nature corrupted by the act of another. Angels, on the contrary acting each independently of others and on his own separate responsibility, and sinning with full understanding of the consequences in defiance of heaven, fell beyond the possibility of recovery.

The human race was constituted on an entirely different basis. It clusters around a single stem. Men are connected like the branches, twigs and leaves of a tree with a single trunk, and derive from a single root. Adam stood as the federal head

and representative of the race that was in him. Therefore while angels were irretrievably lost by their sin, God found it possible to redeem men, and restore them to allegiance by providing a second federal head and representative to the race, through whom all that was lost in Adam might be regained.

Redemption once determined on, an atonement became a first necessity, as the scriptures assert, Jno. iii:14: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the son of man be lifted up." Hundreds died; there was no escape from death for any: God, without removing the deadly reptiles, provided a remedy for the bitten. Sin is the viper that stings the soul to death. God provides a remedy in human form—he must be lifted up on a cross. There is a MUST BE in the case. He heals only as lifted up on a cross. Jno. xii:32: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The drawing is conditioned upon the lifting up. Jno. xii:24: "Except a corn of wheat falling to the ground die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." So the dying Savior will multiply fruit. Heb. ii:10: "It behoved him to make the captain of our salvation perfect through suffering." Christ with all his love and power was not a perfect Savior until he had suffered. Acts xvii:3: "Paul reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging that the Christ must needs have suffered and risen from the dead." The ancient scriptures, from the time of Abel in words and by types, declared that the coming Savior should die like the

lamb of the sin-offering. This was the thing represented in every act of formal worship. Heb. viii:3: "It is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." The order of the priesthood existed only on account of the prior necessity of an offering. Jesus Christ is the only real priest in the universe, and he is appointed because an expiatory offering MUST be made. Heb. x:11: "Where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator." Christ can give effect to his testamentary provisions only by dying. Heb. x:22: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." The Jewish altar ran with blood often like a wine-press in the time of the vintage, and its fire was never out, proclaiming and foreshadowing the bloody sacrifice, which God would make. Reasons for this necessity, so variously expressed and implied, are not hard to find; they are drawn from the nature of the law of God, and from his character, as it is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Right and wrong are such independently of the will of God. The distinction between moral precepts and positive enactments could not exist if God's expressed will alone rendered any duty essentially and eternally obligatory. Some things are right in themselves, and others may be objects of specific requirement binding only for a time, and having no permanent obligation. Such were the ordinances of circumcision and animal sacrifice, which were of temporary institution, and have no foundation in the nature of things.

The moral law of ten commands on the contrary is bottomed on the nature of God, and the nature of intelligent creatures, and is written on the heart of every spiritual being in existence, and stands emblazoned in starry letters on the universe of moving worlds, and blazes in uncreated light from the throne of God. It is beyond the power of Jehovah to destroy or change. His own nature is conformed to it; he is not an arbitrary being, but a holy being. His will eternally and unchangeably approves and sustains the right, his law enforces it.

This law is dearer to him than the happiness of creatures or his own happiness, being the expression of his moral attributes. God can never change; even man or devil cannot of himself change his own character; and can God surrender his law and cease to be God?

Further, the law is perfect, and the least change destroys it altogether. It is but a single requirement—of universal disinterested love. It is one in such a sense that to break a single command is to violate the whole, and incur its fearful penalty of eternal exclusion from the favor of God for the first offence. “If a man keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” James ii:10, and if the law giver fail to enforce it in one point, he abandons it altogether. The least deflection from the right line of duty is a change from absolute perfection to sin; and to show indulgence to a single trespass is to surrender the law forever. Placed as Jehovah is by nature and by right on the throne,

for him to pass by a crime without condign punishment would be equivalent to committing it himself.

A juror or judge, who, for light reasons or any reasons, would pardon a criminal guilty beyond a reasonable doubt of crime, is as guilty as the perpetrator of the evil himself, and inflicts a greater damage upon society. Better far defective laws rigidly enforced than the best system of administration existing only on parchment. Our Savior himself says Matt. v:18: "Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He is evidently speaking of the law of ten commands which is the subject of the sermon. The dot of an i or the cross of a t in the law has infinitely greater stability and permanence than the universe of matter. The law of Sinai stands incomparably firmer than the laws of nature, that govern worlds and systems. In order to maintain perfection, deviation by a hair's breadth from the straight line of right can never be allowed.

Civil rulers throughout Christendom have had great hesitation about pardoning crimes. Many a man has perished on the scaffold, whom the government would have spared, if an expedient could have been devised, by which the honor of the law could have been sustained. The circumstances of some have aroused deep sympathy, as for instance those of the lamented Andre in the war of the revolution, the warrant for whose execution is reported to have been wetted with the tears of Washington as he

signed it. Others have been so thoroughly penitent as to afford certain promise of good citizenship in future if released; but as Lord Mansfield said when petitions for the pardon of Dr. Dodd, executed for forgery in England, flooded his office: "the pardon of capital crime in one instance is a verdict of murder rendered against ourselves for the execution of all former delinquents of the same class." The law hanged them both amid the protestations of society.

The majesty of law is not to be trifled with. The conviction of this found expression in that feature of an ancient government incidentally mentioned in the scriptures: "the law of the Medes and Persians changeth not." The King himself could not rectify an error, or right a wrong once authorized and sanctioned. There is certainly wisdom in the maxim. Just laws should be impartially administered, and inflexibly sustained.

The law is the declaration of the moral sense of a nation; and shall the convictions of mortals, whose interests are limited to a single generation, possess such sanctity and command such homage, and shall not the law of the Most High, extending over a universe of worlds, and continuing through an eternity, be inviolable? There is a majesty about the code of heaven which dwarfs everything earthly by which it is attempted to illustrate it. It is applicable to other races of spiritual beings than our own.

God's creative work is only begun. It is true of the innumerable worlds existing as of our own: "He created it not in vain, he formed it to be in-

habited" (Is. xlv:10) by intelligent beings in an endless variety of organization and constitution, as respects bodily form and mental equipment.

When these numberless worlds are tenanted by intelligent inhabitants, the empire of Jehovah will be practically boundless; and the human race may act a most conspicuous part in the grand economics of his government. They will be able to teach angels, and may serve as kings and priests to infant races yet to be created, being, on account of their experiences on this earth, able to utter warnings against the invasion of sin which no others can, and to set forth the infinite love of God as others cannot.

All these races will be under one administration and one law, a law to which God himself is conformed; a law on which his throne is built, unalterable as his being. His arm is competent to maintain it. He is not unworthy of the station which he occupies at the head of all things.

He commands only what is for our best good and happiness. There is not in any life a single moment of pure happiness and unmixed joy until the soul comes into conformity with God's law. Infinitely better were it that the material laws which govern gravitation, combustion or light should be suspended to the material damage of worlds, than that moral law on which depend eternal peace and happiness.

The necessity of atonement appears from the nature of God as made known in the scriptures. He is not only holy but infinitely just; his law is

the most perfect expression of justice possible. It demands supreme love to God our maker. He has not a better right to the throne on which he sits, than to the undivided homage, love and service of his creatures.

Could a seraph from the skies "a burner" reveal to men the motive which actuates him in his tireless service, it would be discovered that the only reason he could give for the love and devotion, which like a consuming fire are eating him up, and for that zeal which has so vehement a flame, would be that God had created him to glorify and enjoy him forever. Suns and worlds do not better obey the law of their being. Men are under the same obligations. God's requirement of disinterested love of our fellow-man is just.

God is just not only in his requirements; he is just in his retributions.

Justice is indeed a glorious attribute; but there is no tenderness about it. It is necessary to separate from the conceptions of it all notions of mercy, and view it as it is properly represented among men, by a statue of a female holding in her left hand a true and impartial balance, and in her right a naked sword, while eyes and ears are bandaged. She has no eye to pity, no ear for groans or supplications; she knows no relenting. In the fair balance of God's law actions and thoughts and intents are truly weighed. Only perfection will pass the scrutiny. The sword that smites the delinquent will divide the soul and spirit, and pierce the joints and the marrow.

The terrible phenomena accompanying the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, the fire burning up into the midst of heaven, the mountain quaking greatly, the lightnings and thunderings that made the hearts of the congregation almost stand still, the earthquakes, the like of which never occurred elsewhere since the earth was inhabited, when "mountains leaped like rams, and little hills skipped like lambs," were the most emphatic declaration of the energy with which the law should be sustained, and every transgression of it should be avenged. The inflexible sternness of God's fixed purpose was most terribly manifested.

The law was written afresh in the blood of Christ. If his prayer that the law might pass, offered with agonies and tears and blood, the stern and holy Jehovah refused to hear: what prospect then can there be of escape for any transgressor? To suppose that the divine government lacks energy is to make a fatal mistake. Such are the terrors of God's holiness, justice and truth that flesh and blood cannot see him and live. "Our God is a consuming fire." Of the possible violence of fire no proper estimate can be made. We must wait until God kindles the flame that shall consume this earth, when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat," solid mountains flow down like wax, and even old ocean burn. Water will burn with a flame of surpassing brightness and an enormous explosive force, capable of tearing boiler iron as though it were wet paper. "The heavens will pass away with a great noise"

(2 Peter iii:10), "and there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1), and fervent heat; then will be realized the word: "our God is a consuming fire."

God is also true, and no attribute of his awful character deserves to be more glorious in the eyes of a deceitful race, whose first infant speech is falsehood, and whose whole life is a lie. Truth transparent as the uncreated light begirts his mighty throne, and blazes in unapproachable splendor around him. A sunlight sincerity envelops his whole character with incomparable glory. It is not easy for deceivers to realize the majesty and elevation of the great being who "cannot lie." A lie is the starting point of all sin, and the first taint of moral corruption, the first symptom of spiritual death. God has often shown his intense abhorrence of it in the speedy judgments of his providence.

Further, he has the necessary energy, the nerve as men call it. How prevalent is the feeling that the divine government lacks energy! "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily," men are hardened against God; but if he is capable of inflicting unmitigated anguish upon his own and only begotten son, the object of his most intense affection; can he hesitate to enforce a law vital to the continuance of his government, and to the happiness of his intelligent creatures?

It must be remembered that his displeasure against sin is a "fierceness of anger," and his determination to punish it is humanly speaking a "vengeance."

Then he is supremely benevolent; this is the crowning glory of his nature. In no act of his administration has he displayed a higher degree of goodness than in his pursuing sin with an everlasting curse, as the only thing that can ruin and destroy an immortal spirit.

The necessity of atonement is self-evident from the fact that it has been made. The suffering of the great Redeemer was by no means necessary in order to render Jehovah merciful, and incline him to forgive. His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting in a tenderness incapable of increase. It is literally infinite in its yearning solicitude; but before it could be gratified governmental impediments were to be removed; yet his mercy triumphed over all obstacles. His only and his equal son became intimately, inseparably and eternally identified with the sinning family. He took into union with his divinity a mortal body and a rational soul, and "was made in all things like unto his brethren," that he might become a second federal head of the race, and so might suffer in their stead. All other objects of his incarnation were secondary and incidental. This end was in his thoughts from the commencement of his ministry, and doubtless was one principal subject in his prayers continued through whole long nights of solitary supplication; as it had formed the burden of his prayer on the mount of transfiguration. He was beseeching that his humanity might pass the dreadful ordeal without "fainting, or becoming discouraged," till his

work was completed, and he had "set judgment in the earth." This was human nature calling for almighty help.

The infinite stoop made by the son of God in assuming our humanity created by its first announcement to the angelic host a silence in heaven for a space: nor can it be realized by mortals at all, until with our own eyes we behold the glories of the eternal throne; nor will it be fully realized even then: the wonder will grow forever.

In Gethsemane the prospect seemed almost to overwhelm him, so vividly was it realized, and led him to pray "with strong crying and tears that if possible the cup might pass." His prayer can be repeated in a fraction of a minute, yet was he on his knees one hour at a time for two successive hours; and though the night was so cool that the officers required a fire for their comfort, yet his sweat rained upon the ground so tinged with blood that it resembled great drops of blood. Death would have ensued immediately had not an angel been sent in answer to his petition to strengthen the fainting body. Such was the prayer of him whom God always heareth. Was it possible for that law to pass? Let Calvary answer. Then atonement was necessary. Would God sacrifice his own son without a dire necessity? A crisis in the divine government was reached. The question was shall it be sustained?

The son of God, extended on the rack and put to the torture, declared this truth. The sin-avenging Deity crying to that sword which had slept in

its scabbard for six thousand years: "Awake, O sword, and smite the man that is my fellow" declared it. If God's naked testimony it were mortal sin to disbelieve; if for our solemn conviction he has even affirmed some things under oath; by what declaration has not this great truth been certified? Not by words so much as by acts; not by common acts so much as by his conduct in an emergency calculated to try him to the utmost. So to speak, put to the torture he has sustained the statement, "without shedding of blood is no remission."

Suffering is of two kinds—disciplinary and penal. All suffering in this life is disciplinary; of penal suffering we know almost nothing. All have felt the chastising rod of divine affliction, sometimes too heavy to be borne. God's sword has never smitten in this life. "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" The sufferings of Jesus Christ were penal in their character. By the side of his anguish of soul, all the sorrows of six thousand years, in all the countless breasts that have heaved, and hearts that have ached, were joy and pastime. Let them all be crowded into the space of a single day, all the pangs of remorse, all the agony of desolation, and all the horrors of bereavement that were ever experienced, and they all are but as the drop of the bucket, the tears of infancy, or the transient sighing of the dreamer. When Jesus suffered the rocks opened their dumb mouths, earth trembled with astonishment, and the sun forbore to shine, and a groan went up as if the final dissolution of all things were in progress.

The merit and virtue of the blood of the son of God cannot be overestimated. It has an effectual power to relieve the conscience and cleanse the heart, which can never be exhausted. One single coal from the altar of his offering only touched the lips of Isaiah, and his "iniquity was taken away and his sin was purged." The slightest spray of that blood will turn the scarlet of sin to the whiteness of snow, and its deep crimson to the brightness of wool. Though seas and floods would fail to wash out the "damned spot" of guilt, a drop of blood divine can and will restore angelic purity.

Probably a more guilty personage than our great progenitor Adam never stood upon the globe, indirectly chargeable with crimes other than his own acts; yet judging from the meagre history remaining, even he found forgiveness and cleansing. Did the accumulated guilt of the world rest upon a single head, it could be pardoned and removed; while the peace of angel innocence would brood over the wretched guilty heart.

God's willingness to pardon and to help is as great as his ability. He is eagerly watching for opportunity to bless and to save. (2 Chron., 11:9.) "For the eyes of the Lord run to and go throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him." (Is. 66:2.) "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." He looks over the shining ranks of angels; but his

gaze is not fixed on any one of the glorious host; he looks over the whole body of the human race, and his gaze fastens intently on one. Who is it that thus attracts his look, as a father looks upon a beloved son, or as a lover who cannot withdraw his eyes from the object of his affection? It is the poor, trembling, contrite sinner.

CHAPTER III.

A SERMON.

THE FALL OF ADAM AND THE PROVISION OF A
REDEEMER.

And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him, Is. lix:11.

These words seem to have described a thoroughly degenerate age, when hardly a faithful man could be found, and when no prophet was living who could intercede in behalf of the nation by an effectual prayer. Such a condition was well calculated to bring to mind the time when God saw that there was no Adam, that he had fallen from his integrity; and when a great silence fell upon the glorious hierarchies of the skies, and no voice of intercession

from earth or heaven was heard; and when it was plain that God himself must devise a plan to rescue the lost race, or be defeated in his purpose. At this juncture The Wonderful, the Counsellor gave the counsel which restored hope to man, astonished the heavenly host, and opened their lips in loudest praise, "Save them from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." "I have laid their help on one who is mighty."

A few words are demanded first, setting forth the enormity of the transgression in Eden. Of the first invasion of sin into the universe no inspired account is given; it is known only that it made its entrance in the midst of the brightness of heaven's light, and that the form sin first assumed was pride begotten in the souls of a portion of its holy company of angels, without the agency or connivance or collusion of the Most High in the slightest degree. It was solely the act of the creature rebelling against the purposes of God.

A very plausible conjecture has been suggested respecting the occasion and the provocation. At sometime in the past eternity it is imagined that the whole array or angelic beings, the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers of every rank and order were summoned from all quarters of the boundless empire of Almighty God, in order to hear the announcement of his purpose and decree to bring into being a new race of intelligences lower than the angels, of a mixed nature, half brute and half angel; and in the course of ages to advance them above the whole retinue of seraphim and powers, and

even to place this inferior nature on the eternal throne, with all power in heaven and other worlds to administer according to his pleasure.

Against this decree Lucifer, the highest creature ever made, with the most sublime endowments ever communicated, standing nearest to the steps of the throne itself, demurred, and a third part of the heavenly host sympathized with him. Pride was thus conceived and born, taking full possession of them, and transforming them into rebels, as the smallest amount of virus injected into the blood of a living animal soon degenerates its whole mass.

When man was created, the original pair were placed on probation, with a single injunction to test their obedience and loyalty. No government accepts a firearm or a sabre or a ship without demanding a test, a trial which shall demonstrate its efficiency. All ranks of intelligent creatures are expected to undergo the test which God may prescribe. It was impossible to impose on our first parents a prohibition afterwards contained in the ten commandments. Had God said to them "thou shalt not kill," there was no one whom either could be tempted to kill. Had he forbidden adultery, or theft, or false witness against a neighbor, such offences were impossible.

It was necessary to prescribe an entirely arbitrary injunction as was done by the command "thou shalt not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; in the day thou eatest of it thou shall surely die." Not that there was any especial virtue in the fruit of that tree; God might have

designated any other fruit tree by forbidding its use, or have said thou shalt not drink the water of a certain spring, or thou shalt not cross a certain boundary line, as far as we know. It was only needful to fix some test, by observing which the newly created pair might show their continued subjection to the great being who had given them a life like his own.

This command did not deprive them of anything necessary for their subsistence or comfort; they still had more than heart could wish; and it was an advertisement to them that danger could assail them from this quarter only. This point alone needed to be rigorously guarded; and their continued happiness was assured, as long as this one and only direction was complied with.

The trespass of Eve occurred on this wise. On a certain day while separated from her husband, she beheld the serpent, which from his superior sagacity and friendship for man was her favorite pet among the brute creation, eating freely of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Astonished at the sight she waited to behold his instantaneous destruction; but instead, to her immeasurable surprise, he not only spoke to her with the voice of man, but gave evidence of the possession of reason like herself.

She had thus presented to her eyes a demonstration, as she thought, that there was an occult virtue in that fruit, that would if used by her elevate her into the rank of angel at least; angels being called gods. The serpent, one of the monster class (Rev.

xii:9 xx:2), boldly declared that the word of God was false, and insinuated that the prohibition of the tree was for a malignant purpose.

In eager haste she took of the fruit and did eat, being thoroughly deceived by the great tempter. Had she waited to consult with her husband before the irrevocable act took place, the momentous result might have been different; had she but prayed, "Our father who art in heaven, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," the result would certainly have been different; but her eagerness forbade delay, and she hasted to verify the words of the serpent.

Transgression usually takes place in hot haste, even when it follows long deliberation; the venture is enormous; the unhallowed desire rises to a fever, and action is immediate. Her very being must have been shocked at the view presented of the character of her great creator and benefactor; but all the obligations, and the command and the warnings were forgotten in that memorable hour of temptation and guilt. Had she obeyed her first impulse she would undoubtedly have turned her back in flight. Safety never lies in listening to or parleying with the tempter, but in a look to God alone.

The human race, however, did not fall in Eve; she fell as an individual. Adam's transgression may not have occurred on the same day or the next, how long time intervened is not known; but we do know that his act was deliberate, and done with his eyes open, and with full knowledge that he was taking a step that would implicate a race for whom

there is not standing room on this globe; the step was taken with full understanding, and complete purpose and intent. In the geologic ages new forms of life appear very suddenly; and invariably the earliest specimens of the remains found to-day show a superiority of organization over their distant successors. Degeneration and not improvement is the law that governs; a fact irreconcilable with the evolution theory. Adam was intellectually and physically the equal of any of his ordinary descendants, if not their superior.

His disobedience was more rank, virulent and defiant than Satan's, and he escaped Satan's doom only because of the yet unborn millions that were to proceed from him. Human nature was corrupted in its very fountain; his posterity sinned in him and fell with him. He and his descendants were expelled from the presence of God, whose attitude towards them was represented by the fiery sword. This sword stood for God himself whose seat is between the cherubim, all whose attributes are leagued for its expulsion and punishment.

As federal head of the race he impressed on each of his descendants the very impulses which actuated him in his rebellion. Animal propensities took the ascendancy over the spiritual; he would sooner be separated from his God than his wife; he also gave full indulgence to his animal appetites in eating of the forbidden fruit; sexual lust, intemperance and gluttony assumed the throne within him; pride has ever since dominated the soul of every human being, aspiring to become as gods—pride with all

its viperous brood envy, self-will, malice, revenge, etc.; disbelief of God's testimony; there is not an unrenewed person who believes the word of the Great Being who "cannot lie;" falsehood, Adam knew Satan's assertion "ye shall be as gods" to be falsehood, which Eve did not; yet he voluntarily chose to accept it; and thenceforth his children "go astray as soon as they are born speaking lies." What parent has not been horror stricken on hearing from his own beloved the lie on infantile lips! A lie is an afterthought; the truth is always in the mind, but the false is spoken.

Adam was created in the image of God; but he begat a son in his own image; and truly such he was, a murderer and a vagabond, and none of his descendants is by nature better. "There is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But all these dreadful passions which took possession of the soul of Adam are as nothing in comparison with the opposition to God, and charges against him, and enmity which predominated over every other feeling in his bosom, making him a rival of Satan in his rage against his maker.

"There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are

in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.” Rom. iii:10-15.

This testimony of God is like the witness of a tender and loving parent against an erring child, when forced to testify against his own son in a court of justice. Not a word is beyond the truth and is rather softened in statement than exaggerated. Not a word is set down in malice. “God saw that there was no man” no Adam, and wondered (humanly speaking) that there was no intercessor.

Adam could not pray; “his mouth was filled with cursing and bitterness.” He was standing on the crumbling edge of perdition, ready to become a devil; and no breath of desire moved in his soul for deliverance and restoration to his Maker’s favor. None of the glorious denizens of the world of glory durst intercede, mercy was not known to be an attribute of the Deity. His unlimited goodness was well understood; but mercy is a quality infinitely beyond benevolence. The secret of the Most High was not suspected by the most advanced of the sons of light.

In this condition of despair when hope from every quarter was cut off, “his arm,” that is to say his power boundless in resources “brought salvation unto him,” and his justice was glorified by it, demanding the provision of full satisfaction to the eternal law.

It is usual to say that the cross of Christ exhibits more vividly the mercy of God; the state-

ment of the scripture is that it most strongly displays his justice "to declare at this time his righteousness," better translated his justice, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The three words "righteousness," "just" and "justifier" are all the same word in the Greek in different forms, and there is no reason for translating them by different terms.

The atonement of Christ shows that sin is unpardonable, and that no sinner, however penitent and humble, can be forgiven unless God in the transaction can be strictly and gloriously just. Mercy is not the darling attribute of the God head, "justice and judgment are the foundation of his throne."

It were an immense concession for God to accept an atonement for human sin, if man could procure a substitute capable of suffering his doom, and willing to endure for him. In human contentions feuds implicate whole families, and descend to generations; and the offended party is not satisfied but with the blood of the guilty trespasser himself, or of his immediate heir, in case of the death of the original transgressor. In the human bosom retribution becomes vengeance, ready to exult in the suffering of its enemy, and almost to drink his blood, and is insatiable as the grave, and in a fever of haste.

God by permitting an atonement shows himself destitute entirely of the feeling of personal affront, and desirous solely of maintaining a firm and perfect government. His dreadful threatenings against transgressors are not words of passion but words

of government. His determination to sustain and enforce his law is changeless as his nature, and firm as his throne. The substitution of Jesus Christ as the great sin-bearer for guilty man revealed to holy angels the true inwardness of the divine nature; and was to them a surprise beyond all that had occurred during a past eternity, and as great a revelation to them as it has been to man. On the plains of Bethlehem the joy inspired by the arrangement thrilled them, as though the great sacrifice had been made for them.

In his original constitution man was a compound of brute and angel; by his sin he became a mixture of beast and devil and in the fearful language of the scripture a "fool:" in his intellect a fool, in his appetites a beast, in his passions a devil.

He comes into this world in which to angel eyes God is revealed almost as clearly as he is in the world of glory, "the whole earth is full of his glory," shown in the wonderful combinations of beneficent design, and beautiful adaptations for the comfort of living beings, where every spear of grass points to him, every drop of water proclaims him, every ray of light reveals him, and considering it all says in his heart "there is no God." He is "a fool."

Animalism rules him as it does the beast. His passions are sufficient to make a hell. He is a devil in his opposition to God and enmity against him. All this sad and terrible arraignment has been demonstrated by facts abundant.

What has been the history of the race? In ten generations from the beginning "God saw that the wickedness of man on the earth was great," that it was "full of violence and blood," and "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." All their other crimes were light in comparison with their opposition to God. A season of revival is indeed recorded, and of the striving of the Holy Spirit, when "men began to call on the name of the Lord;" but by the tenth generation the knowledge of God was lost, there being but a single family that continued to worship him. As for the remainder, "they had all gone out of the way, they had together become unprofitable," and it became necessary to sweep the earth with the besom of destruction, and begin the race anew.

How was it after the flood? a very meagre history of events occurring before the call of Abraham is left; but when men multiplied on the earth again, their first great effort was a general conspiracy against the Most High God, in which the whole population were eagerly interested. Very little is known about the tower of Babel except that it was an expression of resistance to God, and defiance to him. The Lord had bound himself by promise never to destroy the earth and its inhabitants again by flood; and it became necessary to adopt an expedient of another kind entirely, in order to defeat their purpose. When their scheme became a failure, and they were compelled to scatter to different portions of the globe, they soon forgot the

mighty maker of heaven and earth, and with one consent rushed into idolatry, worshipping every thing but the one living and true God. All sins were trivial and inconsiderable in comparison with this monster evil, the sum of all follies and the mother of all abominations.

Idolatry, at first satisfied with the worship of the heavenly bodies and the forces of nature, gradually became more and more corrupt and debased, until nothing was too mean and vile for man to worship. Idolatry ended in the deifying of the baser passions of humanity, and soon became the worship of devils. God was first ignored, then forgotten, and soon every trace of the real knowledge of him was lost, and he was blotted from the memory of his own creatures utterly. No error or delusion has ever held the human mind with such tenacity: no reasoning, no discipline, no demonstration has been able to dislodge it.

Did the terrible experiences of Egypt in the days of Moses, the ten plagues and the devouring sea convince the Egyptians of the being of the one living and true God? They indeed learned that Jehovah was a mighty God; but not the one only living and true God. Did the wonders wrought in Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar produce any lasting impression of Jehovah's being and power? The grandson of the old King in that very palace called for the golden vessels dedicated to the worship of Jehovah; and himself and his lords and ladies drank wine out of them, and praised the gods of gold and silver and wood and stone. Did the

terrific scenes at Mount Sinai convince the Israelites that there was no other god than their own Jehovah? They worshipped other gods at intervals through the wilderness, (Acts 7:42) and relapsed continually into the worship of them, after being settled in the land of promise.

A spell was on the world that could not easily be broken. Men "were mad upon their idols." Never did the soul of man cling so stubbornly to any conviction. The highest grade of civilization made no difference: civilized and savage alike agreed in this. If there is one thing about which all the inhabitants of the earth have concurred without a dissent, it has been the worship of idols. Even Socrates, a believer in one great artificer of nature, with his latest breath acknowledged and worshiped an idol; and Cicero, the champion of the unanswerable Platonic argument from design manifest in the works of creation for the existance and agency of one only living God, since so fully developed and further illustrated in Paley's Natural Theology, lived and died an idolater.

The great author of nature seemed too distant, too exalted: subordinate deities were required nearer man, and more in sympathy with human life; just as the papist now must have his patron saints and immaculate virgin, and for the same reason.

The date of the advent of Jesus Christ was as early in the history of the race as it could possibly have been fixed. Not only did the honor of God described in the second command forbid its earlier, occurrence, a condition of receptivity on the part

of a considerable portion of the race was also required. Had his appearance taken place earlier Christianity might have been strangled in its cradle. He came as soon as a foothold could be secured for his religion, ensuring its perpetuation without a break. The advent was not needlessly delayed a day. He came when idolatry had at last begun to lose its hold, and was demonstrating its own absurdity.

God not only consented to an atonement by substitution; it was necessary that he should also furnish the substitute. There was a chapter in the history of the father of the faithful which evidently had a meaning deeper than the superficial one.

He had intently considered all the required particulars of the ordinance of bloody sacrifice with irrepressible desire to learn all that was contained and implied in the ceremony; and had made it a subject of especial prayer that its teachings might be opened to his comprehension. "He desired to see the day of the Christ" our Savior tells us, and "he saw it and was glad."

In order to show him the full meaning of the sacrifice, God demanded his only son. The willingness of the patriarch to comply, and his faith could have been equally well tested, had God commissioned disease to snatch away his idol. Opportunity would have been afforded for the exercise of every christian grace, as certainly as it was in the call to make a burnt offering of him. But this was the explicit and unmistakable requirement. No room was left to doubt the meaning of the command.

Why should this particular and mysterious mode of surrendering his child be enjoined upon the aged patriarch? God by the command was saying in effect you prize and actually love the little lamb of the altar, you feel the blow that pierces it, its flowing blood sends a shock through your soul; but know that when the great event typified occurs, a victim infinitely more precious and dear will lie upon the altar. Coming ages will reveal the significance of your offering.

God required of Abraham to lay upon the altar the dearest object he possessed. He is called his only son, because his love for Ishmael was weak compared with his affection for Isaac. He had waited for his birth thirty years which, when the promise was first made, was a possible thing; waited until old age had withered and dried up his life, and the birth of a son had become an impossibility in the course of nature. His most fervent prayers and unyielding faith had centered about the expected son for long, weary years.

Jacob did not more tenderly love his Joseph. When he was taken away and his friends and children essayed to comfort him over the loss, he refused to be comforted, and said: "I will go to the grave mourning for my son," the feeling of thousands of bereaved parents since. The wound is never healed in this life. Years afterwards "the sore ran in the night and ceased not."

Who can tell in words David's love for his ungrateful, erring Absalom? His crown and kingdom seemed worthless without him. There is not a

stronger, purer passion left in the apostate heart of man than love for his offspring. For them he cheerfully endures any toil or hardship. The sight of their suffering is more grievous to him than his own can be; and the ingenuity of sin never devised keener torment than forcing a parent to look upon the agonies of a child which he is unable to relieve. His father's heart was bound up in the lad. How terrible was the command issued! It was not give up your son for another to offer, not give him up for God to smite with fatal sickness; but let your hand be upon him. Take him, bind him hand and foot, and lay him upon the wood of the altar after the last embrace; and reach forth thy hand and take the knife, and slay thy son. Heed not his anxious entreaties, his quivering flesh, nor his flowing blood; but smite again, and feel for his heart utterly to stop its beating. Then kindle the wood with the sacred fire, which you will have brought along, and watch the dear remains till they have literally become ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Abraham was spared the shocking ordeal. Why then had the sacrifice been required? It was to teach him and the world the tremendous import of the simple sacrifice.

The future victim would be one whom God and God alone could provide. This was the meaning of the "Jehovah jireh." He is called the lamb of God as being provided by him. The highest creature is not adequate to the office. The frown of God would shrink him into his original nothingness; how then

could he endure his curse? The standing of the substitute must be as high as the law he seeks to honor, he must be above all law; in one word he must be divine. God himself must bring to the altar the one object of his undivided affection, the idol of his heart, his other self. So Isaac was worthy of the doting fondness of his idolizing parent returning love for love.

The bond of mutual affection between the un-created three is not a matter within the grasp of human or superhuman thought. Amazing as is the mercy of God when in man's default to obtain a friend and substitute to bear his doom, God himself said: "Spare them from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom," I have laid their help on one who is mighty," the story is not half told yet.

What Abraham was released from doing, God himself did; he offered up his own only beloved son. He not only gave him up to the altar, himself became the priest, the executioner. Abraham was made by the most painful experience to realize what was meant by God's exacting the penalty of transgression from his own son.

Sacrifice had to him ever afterwards a meaning which it never had before. He never henceforth brought his lamb to the altar without being penetrated with the sense of those truths, which give the gospel its power to convict and renew. That the sin of man should require so costly a sacrifice, and exact so terrible suffering from the Holy One, and demand the united energies of all the persons

of the Trinity for its extirpation is the great truth, which when apprehended overwhelms the human mind with conviction, and yet heals its wounds and binds up its bruises.

Religion has in all ages been one and the same in its fundamental truths, one and the same in its condition required, one and the same in its regenerating efficacy. Belief in a Savior to come, in a "Redeemer who liveth and shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," produced characters as strong as are found under the full light of the gospel.

In every bloody sacrifice from the time of Abel God and man both participated in the offering; each had his assigned part in the ceremony. Man prepared the victim and laid it upon the altar of unhewn stones, emblem of the eternal uncreated One. God sent the fire which consumed the offering.

Jesus was hung upon the cross by men who could inflict bodily pain and no more; God made "his soul an offering for sin." His soul was as it were crucified, and gave signs of anguish the like of which earth has never seen. These were the sufferings which literally broke his heart, and spilled the last drop of its blood. He did not die by the cross nor by nervous exhaustion, nor anything that man inflicted; but by the frown and curse of God. "It was not possible that he should be holden of death;" it was equally impossible that he should become its prey; death had no dominion over him. All the forces in the universe in concerted action could not have effected his death. It was the same

mysterious agency that made him sweat blood in Gethsemane which by intensified pressure overcame his life. The hand of God was upon him, the justice that rules the universe was exacting the penalty of human sin, the fiery sword of Eden was drunk with his blood.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS OF NAZARETH. THE MAN.

A greater curiosity has perhaps never been felt about any subject than the personal appearance of Jesus of Nazareth. Not a line of contemporary history remains for the information of the world, or a single reliable tradition to guide in forming an imagination of what he was like. The ascetic age conceived of him as ill-favored and unsightly to the verge of deformity. And this opinion held for centuries, the outgrowth of the age. The more modern view regards him as having been uncommonly attractive in person. For neither conception is there certain foundation; yet is there a shade of evidence for the latter understanding.

Moses was an all-around type of him. Adam is in the scripture described as a type of him in one particular, that of headship of the race; David was also a type

in respect to his kingship; but Moses in every particular of his life had a history which corresponded with and represented that of the Messiah.

He was like him in the perils of his infancy; the sword of a king pursued him up to three months of age; both at maturity rejected a throne, Moses refusing the royalty in the mightiest kingdom of the earth; Jesus also left a throne; Moses was rejected by the people whom he aspired to deliver, as was his great anti-type; yet God made him king in Jeshurun, and mediator; thus representing the triumph of the Christ; in executing his trust he attained a sublime elevation of intercession, a brief picture of his master's unchanging love for man; he received and communicated the eternal law; he introduced a new dispensation; in which particulars he also typified him; his body after being buried ascended to heaven; as he appeared in bodily form on the Mount of Transfiguration in company with Elias.

The work wrought by him in delivering Israel from Egypt, in spite of the almost demoniac stubbornness of its king, is a beautiful representation of the work of the mighty conqueror of hearts, in his rescue of a soul from the power of the great destroyer; and his miracles in the wilderness are each of them typical of some mighty work of Jesus. He opened the sea, as Jesus walked upon its boisterous waves; fed the people with bread from heaven, as Jesus fed the multitudes; brought water out of the rock for them, as Jesus changed water into wine; gave them the law; was transfigured before

them; led them through the wilderness. The similarity of events in his life to those in his master's history is perfect and remarkable.

Stephen in Acts vii: tells us that Moses as a babe was "exceeding fair," or literally translated "fair or beautiful to God," which is the highest superlative known to a Hebrew, exquisitely beautiful in modern speech, or as Paul says he was "a proper child," i. e. a "beautifully" perfect child, using Stephen's word to describe him. His beauty saved his life.

When the childless daughter of an old king, who longed for male issue to perpetuate his dynasty, but longed in vain, first saw him, she adopted him in her heart, which adoption was eagerly ratified by the father and sovereign. This fact in the history of Moses lends color to the supposition that Jesus also was exquisitely beautiful, in countenance and in form and carriage. He may have been more feminine in aspect than masculine, as he derived constitution and appearance wholly from the mother's side. At all events he grew up the beau ideal of manly beauty: "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips," Ps. xlv:2; grace of manner and a charm and fascination of address were added, with a sublime self-possession, and a serenity of composure never attained by sinful mortals.

The sketch given of his childhood is the briefest, given apparently for no other reason than to show that he took not only a human body, but a rational soul capable of growth and advance in

knowledge, and moved by all the sinless emotions, sentiments and moods of our nature. "He was made in all things like unto his brethren."

The form of the fourth person in his furnace Nebuchadnezzar saw plainly, undoubtedly a perfect image of the man who afterwards "suffered under Pontius Pilate." His form was beautiful and majestic beyond description.

He was superior to all those influences which ordinarily mould human character, and make the man. The atmosphere of earth is poisoned with falsehood, deceit, profanity, slander, hatred and all conceivable evil example, and exerts a magic power. Chidras chameleon-like assume the color of their surroundings. On him all this baleful environment had no deteriorating effect. The venom found no lodgement in him.

He was not the product of Judaism. No man can rise much above the age in which he lives. The spirit of the age is the formative force which exerts a supreme control over the individual. The heroic age found its full expression in Alexander the Great, a character that can never be reproduced, because the age which shaped him has forever passed. So the age of chivalry formed the illustrious chevalier Bayard a knight "saus peur et saus reproche," whose like will never be seen again, because the age of chivalry has passed, and is gone like clouds never to return.

The spirit of Judaism in its last stage had an intensity of fervor unparalleled. The sentiments of patriotism and religion coupled with the proverbial stubbornness of a disappointed and almost despair-

ing people, combined with the expectations which their holy books warranted, produced a condition of chronic inflammation of temper.

This tender plant grew up in an atmosphere surcharged with poison; as a green sprout out of a dry ground, Is. liii:2; the high conceit of his race was paralleled only by the fierceness of their contempt of the Gentiles. He was the very antipodes of Judaism. He had absorbed none of its virus.

Family training and education had nothing to do with the formation of his character. How deeply his mother's relatives were tinctured with the offensive characteristics of their nation can be seen in the prophecy of Zecharias.

His understanding of the scriptures was not derived from any foreign source. It seems to have been the common opinion that he had received no school training, which was undoubtedly true. "How knoweth this man writings having never learned?" His knowledge was not acquired, the development was from within. He was the only child of the family; his mother would never have been committed to the care of John if she had sons and daughters beside Jesus. As the human faculties expanded to receive, they were flooded with light, not of earthly origin. Where the sun shines tapers are not needed, nor could they indeed appear.

At his baptism by John a great change in his personality and condition was inaugurated. The influences of the Holy Spirit affected his humanity only. The human soul is capable of ever increasing, indefinite and everlasting expansion. This enlargement occurred instantaneously, by the omni-

potent agency of the third divine person, accompanying the administration of the ordinance. His entire being became a holy temple for the indwelling divinity, a fit vehicle for its manifestation. Its capacious powers became sufficient for the full comprehension of the purposes of the Godhead, and for the lucid declaration of his whole will, in the shape which it will retain to the end of time. Nothing in the divine administration was concealed from his view; not the day and the hour of the final dissolution of present things, which "no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son" were commissioned to "make known, but the Father." The divine nature being immutable and incapable of an abridgement of its capacities for the briefest space, and the humanity being mature and in perfect union, Jesus must have known all that was knowable. His survey was broad as the universe, and wide as eternity. The secret things of the Most High were naked and open to his vision.

"The Father giveth not the spirit by measure unto him" the unmeasured powers of the omniscient spirit, and its omnipotent energies were communicated to him "the fulness of the Godhead." As Isaiah foretold the seven-fold spirit rested on him "the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," Is. xi:2, "the seven lamps of fire" of the book of revelation. Rev. iv:5. Nothing of wisdom or of power was reserved from his humanity. Our nature is so complete a miniature of the divine as to render a perfect union possible.

In his supreme exaltation he is still human, still capable of the most entire sympathy with man. He realizes the difficulties, the sorrows, the struggles of every human being, and his heart beats in unison. How he sympathized with Martha and Mary in their great affliction, weeping with them! How tenderly he sympathized with Peter after his great sin! How he wept over Jerusalem! He has such a fellow feeling with every member of the family of man. He is the great sympathizer feeling our griefs as his own. He delighted to call himself the son of man.

He went forth a faultless model of the highest spirituality, purity and affection conceivable. He looked like a messenger from a better world, and from the great Father. Some said that he was John the Baptist risen from the dead, some thought him Jeremiah the weeping prophet risen, on account his visible sympathy; others thought him one of the old prophets returned from the tomb. All these suppositions that he was one returned from the grave imply the unspeakable purity, compassion and spirituality of his look. His appearance corresponded with the highest claims his friends could advance.

Indeed he was wholly separate from sinners while among them. He never confessed sin, but always claimed sinless perfection; and the searching eye of God beheld no evil in him, but proclaimed him the one in whom "he was well pleased;" the first one wholly guiltless since the fall of the race. He walked in the sunlight of God's favor continually, and his communion with heaven was as intimate

at every step of his way, as it was on the night of the Transfiguration; indeed the transfiguration was in his every day appearance, and on that memorable night there was a temporary return to his original condition of glory, and unreserved intercourse with God.

The appearance of this personage was the most cogent demonstration imaginable of the existence of an intelligent Ruler of the universe, most deeply interested in the human family, and most closely observant of its developments.

Idolaters and infidelity worship an unfeeling, impersonal power called nature, the mother of all material things, there being no other, the fundamental law of its dominion being that like begets like. Their philosophy does not explain the beginning of things.

In the coming of Jesus of Nazareth a new and wholly diverse factor appeared upon the scene. His advent was the miracle of time, the most astonishing of all the wonders related in the Christian Scriptures, even those of the first chapter of Genesis. His appearance and ministry revealed God a personal being, creator of all things, a sensitive being, a pure spirit; and clearly defined his character. The sun of righteousness arose upon the world, when Jesus commenced his ministry, disguised beyond recognition.

He was regarded by the people with fear. His supernatural powers, even when his works were wonders of mercy, inspired fear. At the gate of Nain he

recalled a young man to life, whose body was just about to be committed to the tomb, and "a fear fell upon" the population.

In Capernaum when a glorious miracle demonstrated his power on earth to forgive sins, and restore to God's favor, "a great fear filled" the hearts of all.

So the hushing of the tempest on the lake, and the relief of the Gadarene demoniac made men's hearts tremble. The fear of the people was a continual defense for him against the power of his enemies; when these gnashed their teeth upon him and would have taken him, fear palsied every arm, and deterred even sworn officers from touching him. The Jewish mob could murder Stephen for speaking against the temple; Jesus they had not dared to assail.

His immaculate purity and holiness also held every one that approached him in awe. The secrets of every character were naked and open before him; and the veil which men assume before their fellows fell off in his presence. Lust went out from before him "beginning at the eldest even to the last;" murder let the stone taken to cast at him drop from his hand; hypocrisy could not hold its mask; envy and malice durst ask him no second question; avarice gave up its hoards; the rage of his murderers could not prefer a charge against him; he was condemned and executed without a formulated and sustained charge.

He appeared to take no interest in things of a merely worldly nature. As a boy of twelve years

in the city of his fathers, his time was not spent in exploring the localities rendered famous in the history of his family, or in visiting the tombs of his royal ancestors, but in the temple. His reply to his anxious mother shows his self-consciousness even then: you quote to me Joseph as my father, but I know who my father is; and where should I be found but in my father's house? He had a sublime sense of his high origin, a subject of which Mary had never spoken to him. Mothers do not talk of such matters with their sons.

When the disciples called his attention to the buildings of the temple, the stones being so beautifully hewn and fitted as to make the whole pile look like a single block, as the ancients could hew and lay immense stones in aqueducts without the use of cement, so nicely prepared and jointed as to hold and carry water without excessive leakage, some of them even to this day; so precise was ancient masonry; his eye saw the ruins, when not one stone would be left upon another that should not be thrown down.

He was no respecter of persons. In this he was singular and diverse from all men. The directions given in James ii:1-6, concerning the unequal treatment in Christian assemblies accorded to a gentleman in gay clothing and gold rings, and a poor man in vile raiment, which sound so strange to modern ears, and were not fully observed even in the apostolic age, are a perfect description of the Lord Jesus. Such precisely was he in his intercourse

with men, as is commended in these verses. His enemies said: "Thou carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men."

Rank, authority or wealth made no impression on him, earthly distinctions did not affect him in the least. He treated a blind beggar in his rags more kindly than he did a prince, to whose eager questioning "he answered nothing;" the low-minded, vulgar woman of Samaria received his loving attention, as readily as the rich and cultured Nicodemus; he preferred the poor widow with her two mites to the richest men of the nation.

While every one was treated by him with the most tender consideration, a hopelessly unworthy character, however gilded, secured little notice from him but in tearful pity. An unfathomable compassion even for his bitterest enemies was the predominant expression of his countenance. His discrimination was unerring, and his conduct peculiar. Few things relating to the intercourse of men are more strongly condemned in the word of God than the accepting of persons. This characteristic of our Savior is one of the most striking confirmations of his divinity.

It is also undeniable that this kind and loving being was capable of anger. His eye at times carried a look before which men quailed, and crowds were overawed. There were occasions on which he rose to an incomparable loftiness of bearing, and spoke as it were from the judgment seat. His emotions were marked by an intensity and depth never existing in simple humanity, and his countenance; accurately reflected them, being singularly full of

expression; but it is necessary to discriminate between anger in him and human temper in two particulars.

1 Cor., chapter xiii, doubtless a transcript of him from the life, has in its category one description "is not easily provoked," which might better be translated never falls into a passion. There was in him no fit of temper, no paroxysm of rage such as men exhibit, but a stern, withering disapprobation, calm yet threatening as Sinai.

His reproofs were intolerable; they stung Judas to madness, and the most conspicuous figure among the twelve became a traitor. An instance in point is found in his cleansing of the temple. There was evidently a light in his eye, before which its desecrators fled. The feeling which animated him is called by the sacred historian zeal not anger, anger stripped of its vindictiveness, and full of effort for God's glory. "Zeal is the pure and holy flame the fire of love supplies."

Another distinction must be kept in mind, pity always predominated in his anger, Mk. iii:5. "He looked round about upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Love and love alone can be grieved. In him indignation and compassion strangely mingled: he could weep while condemning: his heart was bleeding with pity, while words of doom were on his lips. His anger was grief. His harshest, most terrible denunciation ended probably in a gush of tears. Matt. xxiii:18. Such a strange commingling of fiery indignation, and preponderating kindness and affection is not human; it is divine.

In his ministry Jesus was attended by crowds greater than ever assembled spontaneously to greet the most illustrious personages of history. Luke mentions one concourse in Perea that was numbered by tens of thousands. In it were at least twenty-five or thirty thousands, and there may have been more still; and they were so packed as to threaten damage to some. Under arbitrary governments such immense assemblages of the people are regarded by the ruling powers with serious apprehension, and prevented from collecting if possible, or dispersed as rapidly as might be, as affording occasion for disturbances chiefly political, or for crimes often of the gravest character. No such precaution however was necessary in this case. The multitude was as orderly and quiet as the congregation about the temple. The presence of Jesus was sufficient to restrain them from the slightest disorder, to check all idle bantering and sparring, that unavoidably attend all large gatherings, to still all neighborly gossip, and prevent the petty crimes of larceny, pocket-picking and altercations usually attending large crowds, and engross the attention of all in one absorbing personality. Men's hearts thrilled at his words as the Eolian strings vibrate to the wind.

No other voice was heard, no other object diverted the fixed gaze of the numberless eyes; the least threatened interruption was an annoyance not to be suffered, bringing down upon its author the angry rebuke of bystanders. No teacher was ever so listened to, men seemed to be almost unconscious

of the presence of their fellows, and to see and hear nought but the entrancing speaker. His voice had strange music in it, his countenance was a heavenly vision, and before him hearts throbbed with a new sensation. A holy calm filled the air, and be the day of the week whatever day chanced, it was virtually a sabbath, and the assembly a holy convocation. It needed not the aid of the disciples even to assist in the preservation of order; his own great presence overawed the crowd, as it stilled the tempest on the lake.

One unusual feature of such assemblages as waited upon him was the presence of a fair and some times even a large representation of women and children. Instead of shrinking from dense and promiscuous crowds of the other sex, as they usually do, an extreme desire led them to disregard conventionalism entirely. The female heart less hardened by the rough conflicts of life, and gifted with a keener intuition was strangely moved at the sight and hearing of Jesus. Ladies of rank and wealth left their homes to accompany his suite, and minister to him of their substance.

The presence of ordinary women in large numbers is incidentally mentioned in a few instances, and plainly implied in others, as for instance in the press which surged after him as he was accompanying Jairus to his desolated home; when a young unmarried woman crowded through the mass of people following, in order to touch him or at least to touch his garments. It is not likely that she would thus elbow her way through a dense crowd

composed of men only. Women must have also been scattered thick in the press; and as the case of Jairus in his bereavement appealed most strongly to their sympathies, some of them must have been in the very front of the moving throng.

In another account a woman is heard expressing the sentiments of the assembly: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." The majority of the audience probably were females, and she spoke the common conviction so distinctly, that the Savior answered the speech: "Yea more blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Childhood, unsophisticated as it always is, felt the attraction, and gathered to him as the bees do to the early blossoms. The composition of the crowds about him was singular, and declares the verdict of unperverted and truth loving humanity in his favor, although in the storm of fierce and engrossing passion this voice was not heard.

The truths which he taught, and the precepts which he established were derived entirely from the Jewish scriptures, the Old Testament; which was then understood to authorize hatred of those guilty of injuries, to justify retaliation and reprisals, to approve of polygamy and concubinage, to allow the greatest facility of divorce on the whim of the husband, to condemn only false swearing, to enjoin only formal worship, etc. The teaching of the Nazarene prophet rectified the false interpretations of the scribes, and cast a sunlight glory over the

holy word; but he added nothing new; though it is usual to admit that he did inaugurate a code of ethics entirely new, and utterly opposite in spirit to the Jewish law. His precepts are considered to be characteristic of the gospel which he preached and wholly new; but he derived them all from the sacred books in the hands of the people.

The sermon on the mount is now conceded to have been an exposition of the law of ten commands. A study of it shows that his explanation establishes two rules of interpretation; first that the forbidding of an outward act implies also the forbidding of the temper which would lead to its commission; and second the prohibition of an act and of the temper which would prompt it, carries with it the requirement of the opposite disposition.

So the command "thou shalt not kill" on this interpretation forbids all hatred, envy or malice which by indulgence might incite to murder, and enjoins the possession of the opposite spirit. Its purport is, thou salt not indulge a spirit of hatred even of one who has done you an injury; but shalt cultivate the opposite temper. So from this sixth command he deduced the duties of forgiveness of enemies, and non-resistance of evil. He was saying no new thing; this is no new morality; "this is the law and the prophets;" this is the fair sense of the law of Sinai, and the spirit of the holy books as it has always been.

In Ler. 19:18 is found the command: "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even

so unto them likewise" is the translation of this abstract requirement into conduct. It is its exact equivalent in the actions of the life.

The law of Sinai interpreted by the rules of his exegesis blossoms into gospel beauty and glory. Our generation hearing his interpretation at this distance of time with the utmost astonishment applauds the precepts as new discoveries in the realm of morals: with what amazement must his hearers have been struck at hearing them derived from their own holy books! Had two suns at the instant shown above their heads, their wonder could not have been greater.

Then he knew how to draw from the inspired word principles as fundamental as the law of Sinai, and as perpetual. When he cited to the men of that day the fact that in the beginning God made one man and one woman, and united the pair for life; he enunciated a principle, which at a single stroke would destroy their whole system of facile divorce, and prove the very foundation stone on which alone a perfect society could be founded; a principle more essential to the welfare of communities and states than all other enactments ever made.

So his saying: "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" was an axiom, whose application would tear down well nigh the whole fabric of their religion, whose principal feature was a superstitious observance of the seventh day. God, after having made provision for the support and comfort of man's physical life, instituted the Sabbath to meet his spiritual necessities. It was or-

dained for man's help not for adding to the essential greatness of God. In the order of creation man was first then the day of spiritual communion with his maker; a day whose obligation will be coeval with the continuance of the race.

Truth wields the sceptre of authority over the human spirit, and right commands the conscience, and such was the nature of the authority accompanying him, of which all who heard him were conscious. The people "were astonished at his doctrine." These identical words are four times repeated in the gospel history on four different occasions, and Luke explains their wonder by saying "for his word was with power." No miracles occurred in connection with the teaching at the time, the power mentioned was felt in the teaching, and had its source in the speaker.

There are other notices of the amazement of the listeners: indeed he never spoke without awakening an interest that engrossed the hearers, and on one occasion held them for three days without food or refreshment.

The truths which he inculcated were all derived from the scriptures of the Old Testament, and commanded the assent of every hearer; still they aroused attention and inquiry as to the personality of the teacher, more than to the sunlight wisdom of his instructions. He did not, like the ancient prophets, deliver in the name of God any communicated message; but taught with an authority of his own, identifying himself with the Most High in an intimate and inseparable association. He did not

avow himself in direct claim; but all his words were spoken seemingly from a consciousness of divine prerogative. A higher tone of authority and rank could not be assumed or imagined.

His works proved all that he claimed: that he was the great Creator in disguise come to seek and bring back his banished. His words aroused a far deeper interest than did his most wonderful works. His announcement of the love of God for man was a new theme, capable of stirring souls to their depths. This is the sword that pierces the heart to its center, the hammer that breaks the flinty rock in the human bosom to pieces, the fire that melts it until its dross is purged, and its tin consumed. The sense of it will subdue an enemy and change a sinner into a saint. It is "more than a match for a mill-stone heart which wonders to feel its own hardness depart." "Against thy power rebellious I have strove; but who can stand against thy love?" Lips of clay never spoke of the love of God as Jesus could. This drew crowds as honey draws the bees who scent it from afar. This made some of his parables inimitable and unapproachable.

His teaching respecting the character of man was surprising. He announced himself as "come to seek and to save that which was lost." The word which he used was more forcible than our word lost. It does not mean straying away from the fold of God, but might as well be translated "damned," though not yet in the world of despair.

Nothing so reveals the extreme sinfulness of human nature as the work which Jesus undertook

to accomplish in our behalf. If the agonies of the two divine persons were demanded for man's redemption, his case is an evil one, and his guilt and danger are extreme. And what was the reception which he met? His rejection was a genuine exhibition of human nature. The enmity of vipers assailed him, and swept him from the earth. "The thoughts of many hearts are revealed" by this treatment of the messenger of the skies. This earth has a distinction above all the worlds of God's dominion: it massacred the ambassador of peace and this was the act of the race. His descriptions of human nature has a fearful sound, but they are like the solemn testimony in court of a loving father forced from him against children for whom he would give his life.

CHAPTER V.

JESUS CHRIST. THE GOD.

No more important inquiry can come before the human mind than that concerning the real personality of Jesus Christ. In considering it, attention should be directed to the claims which he himself made, and the grounds on which they rested. It is evident from the history that he relied upon the works which he was commissioned to perform, as the testimony of God to the truth of his mission. They are not only proof of his mission from God: they also reveal his exalted identity. He said to his disciples: "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin." The most stupendous miracles in the career of Moses, or Joshua, or Elijah are inferior in grandeur and testimony to the least and most ordinary work of the Nazarene. It is not the miracle, so much as the manner in which it was effected, that tells.

No other being ever wrought a miracle in all human history. The gift of prophecy and the gift of miracles are identically one and the same endowment, as in the latter no power is communicated, but simply a foreknowledge of God's purpose to interpose, and the manner of his interposition. Moses is often referred to as the great miracle-worker of the Old Testament; but Moses possessed and exercised no more power than any other man. When commanded to cast his staff to the ground, he had no knowledge of what was about to occur, and was surprised and terrified at the result. He did not in any exigency know in what manner God's deliverance would come. When Israel were entangled in the wilderness after their escape from Egypt, and the host of Pharaoh thundering behind pressed upon their rear, Moses was on his knees praying that some way might be opened for their relief, and was the most surprised man of the company when the command came: "speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward" into the sea the roaring of whose waves could be heard above all the din.

So also when the people thirsted in the wilderness and were ready to perish for lack of water, Moses knew nothing about the way in which a supply would come. His words to God were: "What shall I do unto this people, they be almost ready to stone me?" The reply of the angel was as great a surprise to him as to the multitude. That the smiting of the solid cliff with a staff of wood should force the mountain to omit a river for thirty-eight

years, almost staggered his faith. Moses could do nothing without his rod; when it failed, through weariness of his arms to point to the pillar whence help always came, Moses failed. It was not Moses it was his rod.

How differently were the works of Jesus wrought from those of Moses and the other prophets! Everything in earth, sea and sky obeyed the slightest expression of his will, and proved him to be the one who in the beginning said: "let there be light; and there was light." He stands alone in all history as the only one who had in himself power to work miracles, and to commission others as many as he pleased, to do the same or greater works than his own. It was his name through faith in his name that healed diseases, expelled demons and raised the dead.

Our Lord relied upon the miracles and his own conformity to prophecy as proofs of his claims. The miracles aroused the attention of the nation and electrified it; his conformity to the prophecies convinced those that received him. The miracles also revealed the high standing and true character of the mighty operator.

Some of the works were such as no prophet had ever performed since time began, being absolutely creative acts. Among them one class is described as "the maimed are made whole."

The meaning of the word "maimed" can be determined from Mk. ix:43, where it is used in contrast with "having two hands." "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter

into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched." It is plain that the class of unfortunates is intended found in every community, deprived of one limb. The restoration of an arm or a leg can be accomplished by creative power alone.

The feeding of five thousand beside women and children on a single man's daily ration, with a remainder many times greater than the original supply, was effected by a creative act.

The restoration of a withered arm to its original plumpness and muscular power demanded the word of a creator; as perhaps did the straightening of the back of the woman bowed down like a beast with a body carried parallel with the ground. Only he who first gave man the "os sublime" could restore it.

The recovery of sight by the man born blind was a work of the same kind. Such unfortunates have the eye-sockets half filled generally with a rudimentary mass of unorganized flesh, wanting the telescopic arrangement necessary for vision. The supply of the properly organized and arranged material, the hand of the almighty architect alone could furnish.

Other miracles are recorded which seem to demand creative ability, the change of water into wine, the healing of the deaf and dumb, quelling the storm on the Sea of Gallilee: showing that the tempest was conducted by power emanating from him, and restoring the man impotent, (paralyzed) in modern speech for thirty-eight years, and perhaps others.

In another respect the works of Jesus surpassed any ever before wrought. His personal presence with an applicant was not necessary in order to accomplish his merciful purpose; his word was effective at any distance. When the man born blind was reporting his case to the council; that his sight was gained by washing his eyes in the waters of Siloam at the command of Jesus, the first question asked him was: "Where is HE?" as though the cure could not have taken place unless he had been present, and practicing upon him. But his word was effective at the distance of twenty miles, as he, while in Cana of Gallilee, healed the nobleman's son sick in Capernaum. The father, who had intended to take Jesus down in his chariot standing ready at hand, heard in the tone of the prophet as he said: "thy son liveth," such a sublime consciousness of supreme power, that he himself did not go down on that afternoon, as he had purposed; but had lost his anxiety altogether.

How was the mother surprised at that very instant, who had sat watching at the bedside for his death, to see him suddenly rise up, leap out of bed, throw on his clothes, call for food, devour it ravenously, and go out to the sports of young boyhood! With her husband's consent she left home to follow the prophet, hear his instructions, and minister to him of her substance.

So the ten lepers were not healed on the spot, but at so great a distance, that they were not willing to return to give him thanks. One only expressed his sense of obligation.

Perhaps the incident that most strangely illustrates the extent of his universal survey and control took place in Capernaum, when he was called upon for tribute; as it showed that while sitting in Peter's house, he saw every thing in the waters of the lake. Some man somewhere had dropped a coin of considerable size into the water, which a fish, attracted by its glitter, had taken into his mouth but could not swallow, his throat not permitting, nor could he eject it from his mouth. The master distinguished that fish from the millions of others in the lake. The fish, following its own instincts, came to the dock of the city just at the right time and to the hook of Peter; but there was a guiding power behind that instinct, and it resided in the Nazarene. This may be called a trifling incident; but nothing connected with him is trifling. Omniscience, omnipresence and a wholly inconceivable power are declared by it. These incidents taken together prove as much as the creation of a world could.

So when the seventy were sent forth in pairs his real and powerful presence went with each couple, and performed the miracles over a wide strip of country simultaneously, at the various points where the several parties were.

But the grand distinction of the works of Jesus is that they were effected without the use of any means whatever. There was no process, no succession of steps, no interval between his word of command, and the full completion of the work commanded. This is the divine method. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."

The use of clay and water on the eyes of the man born blind was not the use of means contributing to the result in any sense; if they had any effect at all their action must have been adverse. When Jesus spoke, the result followed without an instant's delay. The flesh of Lazarus was a mass of corruption; but at the word of Jesus it became normal, healthy and alive instantaneously, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." This is the manner of a creator, and it demonstrates the personality of Jesus to be identical with him who laid the foundations of the earth, wrapped it around with seas as with swaddling clothes, and stretched out above it the heavens as a tent to dwell in. The creative power of the Godhead was vested in him.

Another ground on which our Lord rested his claims for reception by the people was his conformity to prophecy. Their "scriptures were they that testified of him." The sacred books of the nation contained a most remarkable body of prediction, which could by no possibility be misapplied to any other personage that ever appeared among men, not even in one particular. The great burden of the inspired lore was the appearing of the Savior of the race, who should come into the world virgin-born, the seed of the woman without human father; that he should make his appearance before the sceptre departed from Judah, and before the dispersion of the Jewish nation; being born in Bethlehem, from which little city no other world-renowned leader has originated, and which prophecy has never been fulfilled if not in him; that he should be David's son

in the direct line of succession to the throne, there being but one such in each generation; that the seven-fold spirit "of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and fear of the Lord," should rest upon him; that he should enter Jerusalem his capital in triumph as a king, but without the remotest resemblance to a wordly king in a progress, in any of its accessories; but in strict conformity to the foregoing predictions of the event; that he should be rejected, abhorred and swept from the face of the earth by violence; that under nameless indignities, and in the torment of the most cruel death that earth could inflict, that of the Roman cross aggravated to the last possible degree, he should be dumb as a sheep before its shearers, and not open his mouth to murmur or complain under the most acute suffering; that he should be buried by a rich man; but that his flesh should not see corruption; that on the third day the grave should yield his living body back as the fish did Jonah; that God should make him king indeed, and set his throne on Mount Zion in spite of the combined opposition of the worldly powers; that God should own him as his equal and beloved son, and "give him the Gentiles (heathen) for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." These predictions are interspersed with the most unmistakable announcements of his supreme divinity. This word of prophecy is a "more sure" attestation of Christ's divinity than even miracles could afford; and has been fulfilled in Jesus to the letter, while not one

item of it is applicable to any other character that has ever lived; and none of it has ever been fulfilled if not in him.

The scriptures plainly declare Jesus Christ to be God underived and independent. The first passage affirming this that demands attention, is from Heb. vii:3, which says, speaking of Melchisedeck: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the son of God, abideth a priest continually." This description of Melchisedeck, who ever he may have been, applies to him only as a type, and even then requires a straining of terms beyond common usage; but is intended to be understood to be precisely true to the last letter respecting Jesus Christ; he is without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. It clearly asserts his undervived and independent Deity: that he was not begotten in the human sense of the term. When God says in Ps. ii:7, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee," the language must be understood metaphorically. On the third day he was begotten from the womb of the grave, and was declared to be the son of God with power.

Jno. i:14 again contains an assertion that can never be true of any derived and dependent being: "in him was life." No creature can have life in himself; his life is in God. This is a statement that Christ is self-existent, and he frequently repeats this claim respecting himself: "I am the resurrection

and the life," "I am the way and the truth and the life" "because I live ye shall live also." In him is a plenitude of life indestructible, inexhaustible and incomparable with the life of creatures. The subtle principle of life in its lowest stages eludes the investigations of scientists, and passes human discovery and understanding, and it always will. The breath of the divinity supplies it. Its storehouse is Jesus Christ; he is its original fountain. It can be apprehended and explained, when men can understand God, and find out the Almighty to perfection.

He exists from a necessity of his nature; and the strength of the everlasting force compelling that existence is immeasurable by the mind of man or angel. The creation of races of intelligent spiritual beings, numberless as are the worlds of his empire, will not exhaust his vital energy, or affect it in the slightest degree. The fire of the sun is fed by the continual accession of material necessary to maintain its light and heat: God alone is in no need of supply, he can never be exhausted. The distinction and glory of Jehovah is that he is the living God, that in him is life, that can never cease. This self-existence of Jesus involves the possession of the incommunicable attributes of eternity: He is the first and the last, the alpha and the omega, the "father of eternity" past and future Is. ix:6; infinity, "upholding all things by the word of his power;" and immutability, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

The scriptures speak of the power of Christ as undivided. Paul quotes from Ps. 102 words spoken

to the Son by the Father: "Thy throne O God is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And then, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

God could never say to Moses, behold, the subduing of Egypt's proud King; the deliverance of Israel, the opening of the sea, and the destruction of the enemies in its waters; these are thy works O Moses. He had no part in the work. When so commanded he held out the rod, an altogether other power effected the results: but the laying of the foundations of the earth, and stretching out the heavens above it, were the actual work of Jesus Christ by his own personal power; as will be the final rolling of them up as a man rolls up and lays aside a worn-out garment.

In comparison with these mighty acts, how petty and insignificant seem the mighty works of his ministry on earth! It was a part of his humiliation to perform only such. Could human eyes behold him as he rolls up these heavens as a scroll, and they "pass away with a great noise," a groan as it were of a dissolving universe, some adequate conception might be reached of the incomprehensible power residing in him. Could human eyes behold him com-

ing in the glory of his Father with the holy angels —when, at the voice of him who is the resurrection and the life, who called Lazarus from the tomb, almost the entire dust of the globe shall be reanimated into living forms, and his resistless word shall reunite to them the souls their former inhabitants in each case without error, and behold him open the books of memory, of conscience and of spiritual experience—but human eyes would be so engrossed by the glories and terrors of the mighty judge, before whose splendor the sun itself will forbear to shine as hardly to notice the accompaniments of the scene.

Still another evidence of his independent power is found in the manner in which the miracles of the New Testament were wrought. That the works of the Master himself were effected by his own unconstrained will appears in every separate account of each. They were indeed “works which the Father had given him to do,” i. e. the Father had limited him to works of aid to suffering humanity, and allowed no other; being such as could be effected without ostentation or display.

The apostles wrought miracles by the name of Jesus, and by no other authority. In such a case the name used should indicate the basal authority from whom the power is derived. Had the Father been the real and ultimate source of power, the works should have been wrought in his name. The fact that the name of Jesus, through faith in his name, accomplished everything asked, was a continual proclamation of his presence and of his independent agency.

Even Satan, who knew well the personage whom he was addressing, admitted that Jesus could, without the concurrence of the Father, change the cobble stones into loaves of bread, cast himself down unhurt from the sky, as it were, into the midst of the throng of worshipers before the temple, and even assume the empire of the nations in his own time and way. In this matter, liar though he be, his testimony is competent and reliable. His effort was to induce our Lord to act independently of the Father, and without his concurrence; this was the temptation.

These facts thus submitted explain the remarkable manner in which the name of God is used in the ancient scriptures. The name commonly employed is a plural noun "elohim," meaning Gods; and the literal translation of Gen. i:1 would be "In the beginning Gods HE created the heavens and the earth." The plural in the Hebrew never designates fewer than three objects, and the connected verb is of the singular number. Where God is reported as speaking, he speaks generally in the plural, often however in the singular. As "Let us make man in our image after our likeness," "the man is become as one of us to know good and evil," "let us go down to confound their language," "who will go for us?" "whom shall I send?" "I have given you every herb." These indicate that there is a Trinity in the Godhead, and a unity as well. The plural number is used by God in speaking directly of himself in many passages which do not admit of a plural translation in English, "If I (singular) be masters

(plural) where is my (singular) honor?" "Remember now thy creators in the days of thy youth." "For thy makers are thy husbands." Is. liv:5, "and forgettest the Lord thy maker," Is. li:13, God is the maker or the makers indifferently. Prov. ix:10 "For the knowledge of the Holy ones is understanding." Prov. xxx:3, "I neither learned wisdom nor have the knowledge of the Holy ones." Dan. iv:17, "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy ones." Dan. v:18, "The Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom and glory," v:20 "They took his kingdom from him."

The New Testament reveals to us who these distinct persons are: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The selections given above from the Old Testament might be multiplied: they are representative specimens of a style that is characteristic of the inspired book.

It is also a fact that Jesus Christ himself professed to be God. This profession is heard in his teaching on all occasions; he is not speaking from the standpoint of a creature even of the highest order, but from the elevation of the eternal throne. Real faith receives him for what himself professed to be. It inquires only as to what his consciousness affirms. He certainly knew whether he had existed "before the world was," before "one thing was made that was made," whether he possessed "all power in heaven and earth," whether he was one with the Father in an indissoluble connection: and faith trusts his consciousness, and receives its testimony.

It is true that he made no distinct public avowal of his exalted standing until his trial before the council: it was not his method. He conformed closely to the foregoing prophecy in Is. xi:11: that he should not advocate his own cause by any noisy assertion of his high claims; but still the whole Jewish nation understood his position from the witness of John, and of the heavenly voice at his baptism, confirmed by the uninterrupted course of mighty works following. Still our Lord clearly asserts himself, in his answers to the cavils of his opponents, who were even then stumbling over the stumbling stone of his divinity, which he strongly proclaimed in his examination before Caiaphas.

In Jno. x:37-38 one such answer is reported: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, if ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, *and I in him*" in the same sense. His works could not have been more divinely wrought, if the unseen Father from heaven the holy place had commanded, and accomplished them by his instantaneous energy. The works of Christ were as different from the works of prophets as heaven is higher than the earth, and wrought after the example of divine operation given in the first chapter of Genesis. "If ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me," it would seem that none could deny that the works prove this. They also as convincingly demonstrated that he was intimately connected with the Father by a community of nature.

Indeed he acknowledged no associate, nor partner, nor counsellor but the eternal Father. He associated himself with him in every divine operation, in creation, in Providence, in the administration of redemption, in judgment, in all things. His words assert the equality of the divine persons. Between the two there is a bond so intimate and affection so endeared as to admit of no comparison with any union of creatures. He was continually in the bosom of the Father, ever embraced in the arms of everlasting love. He knew the Father as intimately as the Father knew him. All things that the Father had were his. The connection was inseparable, the son could do nothing without the Father, neither could the Father without the son. They could not act apart, but concurred in every operation. He that had seen Jesus had seen the Father, and he that believed on Jesus had rather believed on the Father.

In short they were not two wholly separate beings united by ties of interest and affection, but they were one being, though the Father was greater than the son, in position only however.

Such unity can exist in the Godhead alone. It is the distinction, the excellency, the glory of the divine three, united in a bond infinitely stronger than a love union. Such words were exceedingly offensive to bigoted monotheists; stones were arguments with them, they cannot be understood by Christians: but what is there about God that can be understood? Can his being without a beginning be understood? Can his power that can call a

universe out of nothing be understood? Can his knowledge to which all is open from the beginning to the end of time?

Another reply to the Jewish cavillers is reported in Matt. xxii:41-48. Jesus, having made himself perfect master of the situation, asked the opposers who stood in a compact body before him: "What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he?" and when they answered: "David's," he again asked: "How then doth David, speaking in the spirit, call him Lord? saying," and he quotes to them the cxth Psalm, a most wonderful prophecy and fulfilling just then before their eyes. The Christ is David's son in his humanity, but there is in him a lordship over David, and over all other beings. God promises to set his throne on Mt. Zion with resistless might and success; and that he should rule in the midst of raging enemies, and have for his subjects a willing people, made willing in the day of his power, and (shortly to be more in number than the dew from the womb of the morning), the correct translation of vs. 3. He shall also enter upon his unchangeable Milchisedekian priesthood, and perform its great function; making the priceless sacrifice, by virtue of which the sins of man shall be expiated, being sustained by the spirit like the warrior by water from the running brook. Rising from the dead to sit at God's right hand, he shall see his foes become his footstool. He shall also see kings subdued before him, and rulers over many countries subjected to his dominion, by the power of that same spirit which sustained him. His op-

ponents had feared to ask him a question, they now feared to answer him a word. Doubtless many who heard him afterwards read that Psalm with new eyes, and it is to be hoped with new understanding, and new hearts.

CHAPTER VI.

REJECTION AND DEATH OF JESUS.

It is not easy to account for the early not to say immediate opposition of the rulers of Israel to the young teacher of Nazareth, and their rapidly increasing hostility which so soon assumed a deadly character, and sought to destroy him so early in his career. Certainly offense was given by him before his first appearance in Jerusalem as a prophet and teacher. It can be taken for granted, though not expressly recorded, that when the rumor of his miracles at Capernaum reached the Synhedrin, a deputation was commissioned to visit the place and examine the claims of the professed teacher, and demand of him, as was done in the case of the Baptist, by the authority of the council: "Who art thou that we may give an answer to them that sent us?" It was a call for an explicit avowal.

This was on their part an assumption of authority by the Synhedrin not sustained by any directions found in their sacred books. No one of the old prophets had been subjected to such inquisition, or had relied on a human court for his warrant. It is quite certain that such a committee did visit Capernaum on this very errand. Of the visit and interview no record remains, and the world is left in ignorance of the answer returned. It was not the manner of Jesus, however, to openly avow himself to be the Christ; and when a departure from his usual course was made, the revelation was given to an humble sincere seeker rather than to a captious critic.

Messages were interchanged between Jerusalem and the Nazarene prophet, whose very name awakened prejudice and suggested, "can any good thing come out of Nazareth? or a prophet arise out of Galilee? It can easily be inferred from the reliable history that the proposal was made to him to commit the direction of his ministry to the heads of the nation, and that on this concession on his part they would agree to recognize and even support a prophet coming from Galilee and out of miserable Nazareth; otherwise opposition might be expected from them. It were wholly inconsistent with the mission of Jesus to accept authentication from man or even counsel or advice. Such an offer can only be classed with the proposals made to him in the wilderness by Satan. His ministry was to be wholly independent of man; the refusal gave the rulers no just cause for opposition.

His first appearance in Jerusalem as a prophet did however give mortal offense, and cause a hatred that pursued him to death. A profanation of the court of the Gentiles, which occupied at least one-half of the sacred enclosure of the temple area, had long been authorized by the high priest for a money consideration; and had been allowed by the council; until it had grown to be an established custom. While everything connected with the temple was regarded as possessing the greatest sanctity, and nothing so inflamed the nation as a violation of its sacredness; yet their exorbitant contempt of the Gentiles led them to esteem an infringement of their privileges in the holy place a venial matter.

This encroachment elicited no complaint from the guardians of the holy precincts. The place had become a market for the sale and purchase of sacrificial animals, and a brokers' exchange for the furnishing of Hebrew money.

The noise of hundreds and even thousands of weary animals, and the chaffing of a multitude of traders disturbed the entire course of worship in all the courts. Then there was the constant clink of coin mingled with loud complaints against the extortion of the brokers; and the result was a clamorous mart in continual operation to the disturbance of all the solemnities of worship. Annas, who was yet living, is reported to have been the first in the office of high priest to introduce this simony.

When on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the new prophet beheld the desecration, it was with an indignation that transported him, and

even transfigured his person. With a loftiness of command that drew the wonder and admiration of thousands of spectators, he single-handed overthrew the tables of the money changers, scattering their coin in all directions, released the restive animals from their confinement, and drove out the owners and guardians as easily as he discharged the animals. All was accomplished without a blow administered except upon the animals; a slight one being necessary in some flocks to incite the leader to the head of the line of retreat to the gate at which they had entered.

It was a most high-handed undertaking accomplished not at all by physical force, but wholly by spiritual power. It presented him as the agent, perhaps the embodiment, of the divinity of the place, purging his own shrine from the debasement of avarice and greed, driving out the profane as the flaming sword drove out our first parents from Eden. He manifested a consciousness identifying him with the God of the temple. The spectacle made beholders hold their breath and transgressors tremble, reminding them of the fearful judgments of the Most High visited in the past upon violators of the Holy Place. The fire of God had flashed out from the altar upon Nadab and Abihu, Korah and his company went down alive into the pit, even a king infringing had received the brand of leprosy. There was something in the countenance and demeanor of the Nazarene that brought all these to mind.

This modest young teacher, tender as a woman, gentle as a nurse, could on occasion flame as a sword of fire. Few were the words he spoke; but a mysterious power was in them; his command devils would have obeyed; all was enacted with remarkable coolness and without haste. Henceforth the high priest and his supporters were deadly enemies; though none had dared to utter a word of remonstrance or resist the order.

No character is so hated as a reprobate when his reproofs are justly merited, and guilt resents. Such wounds rankle, and the sore is never healed. This has ever been esteemed one of the greatest achievements of his entire ministry, as it more clearly reveals the indescribable air of authority and the overmastering presence of the Nazarene. All had been accomplished by the simple personality of the reformer. There was trouble henceforth every time he came to the city. The temple party were in a fever of excitement while he remained.

The twelve after a time at length felt that it was at the peril of their lives that they were seen on the streets of Jerusalem in company with the Nazarene, except when the city was thronged with visitors from all parts of the land.

When their master was called to Bethany by the death of Lazarus, they objected to going to the neighborhood: Thomas at last consented, saying if he goes "let us go and die with him." Shortly afterwards when the little company crossed the river at Bethabara, and Jesus took the road to Jericho and Jerusalem, "as they

followed they were afraid." This visit meant death to him, and death or prison to themselves; death probably, had the enemies succeeded in their plan to arrest them.

It was the common feeling of the multitude in Jerusalem that Jesus would not come to the feast, and they stood in groups questioning: "What think ye that he will not come to the feast?" He was the center of attraction to the whole nation. Had he consulted his own safety he would not have appeared. The hour of decision had arrived.

He did come, but the manner of his coming intimidated his enemies; his parables and discourses inflamed them to desperation.

Knowing that the determination to destroy him was fixed and irreversible, he assumed the aggressive; made his entrance into the city a triumphal one; gave a judicial character to his parables and to the one miracle detailed, that of the figtree; and cleansed the temple the second time with greater severity of rebuke and force of manner; tearing open afresh the still angry wound previously given to the high priest.

Then the teachings of Jesus were beyond measure distasteful to the priestly class. The bitterness of hatred entertained by formalism against a purely spiritual worship has been often exhibited in the persecutions instigated or carried on by the Roman church against the professors of a spiritual faith. A religious hatred surpasses all other in intensity. Hypocrisy was condemned by the Nazarene above

all other sins: "First of all beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy," summarizes his instructions.

When at his last presence in the city he had made himself the lord of the holy house, and perfect master of the situation, and the people were hanging on his lips, he made the attack on the men who sat in Mosee' seat as rulers, in the discourse related in Matt. xxiii. He branded scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites in words that cut to the heart; harsher could not be spoken, and the accused standing before him wilted under them; yet there mingled not a fraction of personal rancor in the terrible denunciation. The closing words were a pathetic cry with flowing tears probably: "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killed the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not." The purpose to destroy him became an iron resolve to hesitate no longer, but to put him away at once.

He had not been able to do many mighty works in Jerusalem because of their unbelief; the city being dominated and swayed by the temple party, and his miracles were performed only at the national feasts, when the streets were crowded with other than the usual inhabitants.

Such were the leaders and instigators of the greatest crime in history, but the people were in sympathy with them. Nazareth had already rejected him and Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida.

The last year of his ministry had been spent in hiding as it were. The seventy disciples had been sent out "as lambs among wolves," so general was the rejection of him. Opportunity only was needed for a formal declaration of it.

At a meeting of the council hastily called to deliberate on the situation, the spirit of prophecy came upon the high priest, (it must have been in consideration of his office; the words and not the man were inspired), and he was led to say: "Ye know nothing at all; nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man die for the people that the whole nation perish not;" words which evidently conveyed the truth that neither Caiaphas nor his fellow conspirators understood the situation at all, nor the rank of the victim of their plot, who should die for no sin of his own, nevertheless it was God's pleasure that he should die to save the sinners of the nation and of the race. This inspired announcement the conspirators misinterpreted according to their excited passions, and were fortified in their resolution of murder.

The attempt to arrest him was indeed a perilous undertaking, and must have been determined on with many misgivings; but the conflict was understood by the priestly party to be a struggle not only for continued power but possibly for life itself. The arresting party was numerous, the evident intention being to take into custody not only the master, but the whole band of his disciples.

The first violence offered to his person was the binding of his arms which he did not resist. After

he had been led away to the house of Caiaphas to undergo an examination before the High Priest, a fear of consequences still restrained his captors from any assault upon him, until it was seen that it could be made with impunity. Then the mockery and insult began. The inspired testimony is, "the men that held him mocked him and smote him;" "the servants smote him with the palms of their hands." His head was also covered to blindfold him, and staggering blows were delivered upon his finely chiseled features with shouts of "prophesy thou Christ who is it that smote thee," until his swollen and discolored countenance looked like that of a defeated pugilist.

Dr. Edershaim has quite satisfactorily shown that a head dress was one article of his apparel. It was probably similar to the "kefiyeh" of the Arab, a piece of some kind of fine cloth three or four feet square or larger, cast over the head, and retained in place by a fillet crossing the forehead just above the eyes, and falling down over the shoulders behind to the waist. This could be thrown forward and thus be made to conceal the face without the use of force. Thus probably was he blindfolded. Others tore out his beard by the roots in handfuls as long before predicted.

The grave and dignified members of the council, instead of rebuking the ruffianly conduct of the menials, mingled in the brutality by spitting into his face. It is hard to conceive of any thing more expressive of utter contempt and of unutterable abhorrence, than the cool discharge repeated again

and again of the filthiest slime of filthy throats upon his visage. They soon forgat their dignity, and joined in the grossest brutalities with the vulgar menials. Truly he was one "despised of men," "whom the nation abhorreth," "a slave of rulers." This scene occurring first in the house of Caiaphas was repeated in the council; where Jewish hate reveled in insult until it was weary. The poison of hate was in their spitting like the froth of the old serpent.

When an offender is in the hands of an excited mob such ruffianism may be expected; but it never in any other case took place in a court room, and in the presence of the judges, whose it was to protect a prisoner until the law delivered him to execution. The like never occurred before or since in a hall of justice and in open court.

Then after the Jewish people had manifested before Pilate their desire that he should be crucified, he was stripped and scourged by the governor's express direction, though not condemned, accused only.

The word used by the evangelists in describing the punishment indicates that the whip used had several thongs. When the punishment was to be made unusually severe, these thongs were loaded with bits of bone or lead. "*Flagellis plumbatis verberare*" is the Roman description of it; the Greek word used corresponds. That this severer form was used with Jesus is rendered probable by two reasons.

Pilate was seeking to satisfy the fury of the people by the greatest possible barbarity of the infliction, in order that he might escape the necessity of crucifying the prisoner, whom he knew to be innocent of the charge made against him. He might as well have attempted to turn the current of the Jordan back.

Another reason for thinking that the severer form of scourging was used with Jesus, is the fact that he fell under the weight of the cross on the way to execution. The Roman scourging was not limited, as was the Jewish, to forty lashes, and the soldier who administered the blows was not lacking in barbarity if he was like his comrades. The lashes were probably continued until signs of collapse appeared; strong and sturdy criminals sometimes sinking in unconsciousness under the blows. Every lash probably tore the flesh and blood filled the furrows ploughed by the cruel thongs.

The history of the trial of Jesus before Pilate, in whom solely was vested the power of life and death, shows that his sincere wishes and earnest efforts in favor of the prisoner were of no avail whatever against the determination of his accusers, not a mob of the lower class, but an assembly comprised of the influential men and leaders of the nation. They were able to play upon his fears of the insane jealousy of Tiberius, who would not hesitate to desolate a province, and soak its soil with blood, rather than tolerate a pretender to royalty. When he expressed his utter unwillingness to sacrifice "this just man" to the passions of an excited pop-

ulace, and solemnly washed his hands of the guilt of such a crime, they were ready to assume the responsibility of his blood. In whatever direction he turned, hundreds of voices cried: "His blood be on us and on our children." His last scheme for the deliverance of the prisoner having failed, he ascended the judgment seat and gave sentence that it should be as they desired; that Barabbas should be released, and Jesus crucified. So they preferred a rebel against Rome and a murderer. The judgment of Pilate and his sentence in the case are at such variance, that it is difficult to believe that both proceeded out of the same mouth at the same time: his verdict being, not guilty in the slightest degree; and his sentence as judge, let him be crucified.

After this final decision, all protection was withdrawn from Jesus, he having enjoyed none during the whole process of trial, and he was abandoned to the will of the soldiers, to whom the idea of a claimant to the Jewish throne was too ridiculous. By a trumpet call the whole band was assembled, whose full complement was a hundred men, than whom a more brutal and pitiless horde could not be found, and the innocent prisoner was used to furnish sport for them as Sampson was used by the Philistines.

The details of their conduct need not be described. It is enough to say they rivaled the worst indignities heaped upon him by the Jews; and that the sight of them moved Pilate to unusual pity, and led him to bring him forth in his mock-royal attire again to the people after his formal condemnation,

and reassert his entire innocence, thinking if the people can but see him abused as I now see him, they would certainly relent.

His words were: "Behold I bring him forth to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him, no nor yet Herod." Herod to whose jurisdiction he belongs, is not afraid of him as a rival for his throne. Can he ever pretend to be king, after being disgraced by every conceivable insult and indignity, after being stripped and publicly whipped? There can be no danger from him now; why demand his death? Can anything be more ridiculous than claiming to be king when a whole people thus reject him? There is no danger from him now. His appeal might as well have been made to the rocks and mountains.

No other prisoner in Roman history was made to undergo this species of cruelty. The crown of thorns, the play sceptre, the robe of majesty, the salutations of mockery, the anointing with spittle, the rude blows of a boisterous soldiery form a chapter of history enacted but once in all time. The miscalled mockery was more properly torture, and it began in the house of Caiaphas, and was practically continuous until the cross received him.

"Many bulls have compassed me: Strong bulls of Basham have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths as a ravening and roaring lion; for dogs have compassed me." Every face was swollen with hatred, every eye glared upon him like the eye of a wild beast: Voices clamored against

him like bellowing bulls, or roaring lions. "And I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; for comforters, but I found none." Ps. 69-20.

The history says, "they were instant with loud voices; they cried out all at once; and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed."

Where were the thousands indebted to him for inestimable benefits, even for life restored? or those released from rayless dungeons of blindness, or from life-long silence and a living death? Could they have forgotten their deliverer; that not a single voice was heard in his behalf? Where were the few who had just declared and with the utmost sincerity, that they would sooner die with him than deny him? No, they had not forgotton, but so terrible was the whirlwind of opposition, that they were not able to stand against the pitiless storm, but like reeds bowed before the blast.

Even the eleven intimates forsook him: but one saw him die. The cyclone of insane fury swept the whole space, but one object was left standing; it was a cross. Sin never so raged, never so showed its exceeding sinfulness. The rejection of Jesus Christ is the climax of rebellion against heaven.

His death shocked the celestial host, if men can judge from the holy indignation expressed in the eyes of the mighty angel of the resurrection, disturbed the course of nature, and shook the throne of God. He suffered without sympathy, he stood alone. Few paid attention to the malefactors: there was as it were but one cross. The attention

of all was drawn to the central figure, and around it was gathered a circle of hissing serpents, each anxious to deliver the fatal stroke.

As the rod set up to draw the fire of the skies and protect the dwelling, must stand alone, and perfectly; insulated so Jesus stood alone when he delivered us by his death, when heaven's lightnings were discharged against human sin. He stood alone when he became surety for man before the burning throne, and he stood alone when he paid the debt.

Arrived at the place of execution, a drink of medicated wine was offered him, furnished, it may be, by the tender sex, the women of Jerusalem, to alleviate those sufferings which none could witness without horror, or remember without a shudder. This was refused by him, and another potion had been provided, the notice of which has covered with everlasting infamy the party suspected of preparing it; the priests handled gall-bladders every day. It was a vessel of vinegar mingled with gall. Hatred that knew no relenting followed him to the very last and sought to add to the bitterness of death. It is safe to say that in no other case was such a draught provided.

Then it was possible to settle the cross in its prepared hole with such violence as would constrain the limp and helpless body attached to it, until the limbs were almost torn from their sockets. That this ever occurred is not matter of record, but that it did occur in the case of Jesus is generally understood. The execution was conducted with unusual severity throughout, or to speak plainly, with un-

paralleled atrocity. Not a pang was spared that human savagery could inflict, or human ingenuity could devise. It is safe to say never was such a crucifixion, never did hatred so pursue the greatest felon.

The cross was ever before the mind of Jesus from the beginning of his ministry, and it was one chief subject of his prolonged supplications during whole nights; that his humanity "might not fail nor be discouraged until he had set judgment in the earth."

The decease which he should accomplish as Jerusalem was evidently the burden of the petitions on the night of the transfiguration, which was a whole night of prayer, and doubtless had been the burden of the other similar whole nights of devotion: yet when the dread reality was before him in Gethsemane, without miraculous support, humanity could not endure.

The depth of his anguish was declared by the portents accompanying it, whose terrible force could not be better expressed than by the symptoms of dissolving nature; such as will attend "the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds." All came upon him in dread reality that was symbolized by the flaming sword of Eden, the fire from heaven, and the dreadful phenomena of Sinai, the earthquake, thunders and lightnings and fire.

The great transaction ending in the death of Jesus Christ was consummated principally in the realm of the unseen. The nature of the sorrow which destroyed his life is revealed in the Gethsemane-

agony, of which but a single glimpse is afforded. How great, how protracted, how dire it was is not for mortals to understand in this world.

Concealment was the order of the divine procedure in the whole ministry of the Savior. His personality was so covered up that his intimate disciples did not recognize it, until his ascension convinced them that he was the supreme God. His power was more concealed than revealed by his mighty works. His omniscience and omnipresence were obscurely but satisfactorily intimated. A veil was over his whole individuality which flesh and blood could not penetrate: only the Father in heaven could reveal what was enclosed by it. His suffering its nature and its depth are beyond human understanding. Himself was satisfied that "it is finished." Cheerfully would he endure all again if by so doing the salvation of men could be better secured, and the way of return to God be made more easy for the penitent sinner. The father also accepted it as a full satisfaction to justice, and immediately bestowed the mighty influences of the Holy Spirit purchased by the expiatory death to operate on the hearts of men to the end of time.

The most astonishing feature of the whole scene in Pilate's court and on Calvary was the indescribable, the divine patience of the holy sufferer. Usually the agony and despair of the victims dictated the most fearful imprecations. The delicate organization of the Nazarene, sensitive beyond parallel, felt intensely. Agony has its signs, and leaves its mark in the deathly pallor of the countenance, the quiv-

ering lips and the fainting frame which revealed his anguish; but not a murmur or complaint escaped his lips. He was silent in his woe, and his divine patience on the cross was more amazing than his mightiest miracles or than them all combined. Nothing more strongly demonstrated his heavenly origin.

The dying thief was converted by the sight, as was Simeon compelled reluctantly to aid in bearing the cross. It sealed the conversion of Joseph of Arimathea, and of Nicodeimus and of the Centurion in charge, and made the souls of thousands tremble, who were ready on the Pentecost and after, to confess faith in him. Of all the wonders of the day, the supernatural darkness, the earthquake, the rending rocks and opened temple veil, none were more amazing than the silent suffering of the Holy One.

And amid the excruciating agonies of the cross he was pitying others. He comforted the despairing thief, his remaining parent, and his sympathizing disciple. Every breath of his lips, every throb of his heart was for others. As his eye had, at the beginning of his sufferings, surveyed his murderers one by one, his soul had been anguished for them, and the prayer had broken from the lips that suffering could not open, which is the wonder of the ages, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." His love had no periods of ebb and flow, no low tide or interval, was ever at high-water mark, and was as manifest and wonderful as his patience while on the cross.

The crucifixion took place at the third hour of the day; but nine hours remaining before the sabbath began; there was not sufficient time left for an ordinary execution. The crucified usually lingered about twenty-four hours, generally longer. It became necessary on this occasion to break the legs of the malefactors, which was done in the most severe manner, with one fracture above the knee and one below, that they might be taken away, and still living and breathing be cast into some hastily prepared grave, perhaps into one of the excavations in the potter's field with the body of Judas, and covered out of sight, that nothing might be left to offend the taste, or pollute the air on the coming Sabbath. According to the plan of his enemies, this treatment awaited the body of Jesus, had not God ordered otherwise; Is. LIII:9 The vindictive rage of the priestly partly, coupled with fear of the escape of their victim in some unforseen manner, had led them to rush the execution without regard to humanity or decency. Mortal sin is generally committed in mad haste. The priests probably anticipated and gloated over the expected mangling of his body; but had to content themselves with guarding it in a chamber of rock.

The disciples of Jesus were evidently persuaded that their leader being lord of life and death could not be put to death by his enemies or by any power of man, and indeed that he could not die. The demonstration was before their eyes daily, and in this conviction they were doubtless unwaveringly established for good and substantial reasons, and

they were correct in their belief. In case of any other human body a copious sweat, tinged with blood, such as occurred in Gethsemane, would have been the precursor of speedy if not immediate death. But death had no dominion over *him*. "In him was life" in its very essence; that mysterious principle which no human philosophy can define or explain resided in him as its primeval fountain and original source. He is "the living God," he is "the life."

He did not die by anything that man inflicted; the hand of man did not prevail against him. His resurrection life demonstrated that his unchanged body could live because connected with him whose life is imperishable.

Our Lord suffered at the hand of God. He did not complain of his bodily sufferings, his attention at least was not engrossed by them. He hardly seemed to realize them. The agony was of another nature entirely: he did complain of suffering from the hand of God, whose alone it is to exact the punishment of sin. The darkened sun, the rending rocks, the quaking earth but feebly expressed his agony.

The curse of God is infinitely worse than the Roman cross. The eternal Father to whom "vengeance belongeth" was the priest, the son was the lamb; the ordeal must have been as terrible for the one as the other. Human nature, though supported by the divine, could endure no more.

Inspiration draws a veil before the great transaction, which it is profane for mortals to attempt to lift. All that it is necessary for us to know is

that Jesus paid our debt to the last farthing, until he could say "it is finished," and the Father in token of acceptance could immediately send the Holy Spirit purchased by the blood of Calvary, to lead men to Christ as long as sinners are found upon earth.

The seven words uttered by the Savior while on the cross are not to be distributed among the six hours of the passion as having been spoken at intervals. The prayer for the forgiveness of his executioners was made at the commencement of his sufferings when the fierce swing and plunge of the cross into its prepared hole dislocated more than one of the principal joints of the frame; or, if the verb expressing his speech be taken as in the imperfect tense, "he was saying" it would imply that the prayer was repeated at the successive steps of the process. It may well be construed as in the imperfect tense. The six hours of the passion were passed in absolute silence, this silence and submission without word or groan, making his death more wonderful than his wonderful life. "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

As the end was approaching he roused from his mute agony, as the dying often awake from stupor just before the end comes, and the remaining six words followed in close succession: the first revealing the nature of the torment which had been consuming his life: "Eli, Eli, lama sabbachthani." He did not mention his bodily sufferings, or seem hardly to regard them. He next called for drink and drank freely, as the Greek word implies, of the

vinegar offered, that he might be able to speak distinctly. He then spoke words of encouragement to the penitent thief, of filial affection to his mother, whom he bequeathed to his beloved disciple standing near, entrusting his spirit into his father's hands, and expressing a sublime confidence that his atonement was sufficient and "finished." He shouted finished, a single word in the Greek, and with a loud cry he was gone. The most remarkable earthquake of all time marked the moment of his departure, and the sun shone out with unwonted brilliancy. His death was sudden and instantaneous, but not premature, his blood, the seat of life, being ready to coagulate at once; a result not usually following for twenty-four hours.

That he had not seemed to realize his bodily sufferings, at least that his attention was not occupied with them, is plain from the history. The men of all ages were before his view; their sins and miseries pressed upon his spirit. These indescribable matters absorbed his attention. His cry "I thirst" fixes the time when bodily sensations again affected his consciousness. The blood having lost its vitalizing principle accumulated upon the heart until it ruptured the organ; and when the soldier's spear pierced the pericardium, flowed out in clots and water; the strangest earthquake of all time marked the moment of his decease.

CHAPTER VII.

[Reprinted from "Sketches from the Life of Jesus," issued in 1891.]

ATONEMENT.

Atonement for human sin by the sufferings of the Son of God is the doctrine which distinguishes the religion of the Bible from all other religions. Of course this doctrine has then been prominent in all the ages; atonement by blood probably being the first revelation from heaven made after the fall of our first parents, and before their expulsion from Eden. This accounts for the universal prevalence of bloody sacrifices from the remotest antiquity; as derived from the immemorial traditions of the race. While the significance of the ceremony was early lost; yet the practice of sacrificial rites prevailed the world. The Bible furnishes the satisfactory ex-

planation of their significance; this form of worship being retained after its meaning had lapsed from the memory of man.

With the selection of Israel as the chosen nation, this truth was made the central orb, about which all their institutions were arranged. The altar, down which an everlasting stream of new and living blood was pouring, and the most Holy place, in which the only offering was new and living blood, were the arcana of Judaism. The long succession of inspired prophets kept the subject alive ever, by the most vivid forecasts of the coming deliverer, who, in the process of time, would accomplish the great redemption by the shedding of his own blood. Ever this cardinal truth has been made prominent above all else; that a redemption by suffering and blood would in the fulness of time be made, by which the results following transgression would be remedied; and man be restored to the favor of an offended God. From the many passages enjoining an offering typical of the great atoning sacrifice, we select the following, as describing minutely and thoroughly the whole process required of the worshiper:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbor, or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein; then it

shall be because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he has sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering unto the priest; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord; and he shall be forgiven, for anything of all that he hath done, in trespassing therein.”—Lev. vi:1-7.

The offender contemplated in this statute is a truly penitent man. He gives good evidence of this by his voluntary confession of his crime. The repetition of this law in Deut. contains an additional item, deciding to whom the money should be paid, in case of the decease of the injured party: showing that this law had reference to crimes long concealed, and voluntarily confessed. The law for the detected thief was different, requiring repayment of five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. The man described in this enactment is guilty of having defrauded his neighbor long years ago; and though perhaps suspected at the time; yet, by dint of lying and swearing falsely, he has managed to allay suspicion, and to retain his standing in society, and his reputation as an honest man; until the injured

neighbor has passed away. The growing burden upon his conscience has in the meantime become past endurance.

Worn with a secret, which has long been consuming his life, he at length makes full and voluntary confession of his sin, aggravated by reiterated falsehood and perjury. It is not necessary to say, that men will endure agonies, before they will confess; and that guilty secrets are not divulged, until death unlocks the lips; and often are carried unrevealed to the grave. The mortification of discovery, and the consequent scorn of the world, and the vindictive hatred of the injured, are too terrible to be encountered; were there not a more formidable array of condemnation in the anticipated doom of the divine judgment.

This transgressor, urged by anguish of conscience, at length makes confession of his crime; and gives another evidence of true repentance, by full restitution to the injured party, or his heirs, or to the priest; in case that they cannot be found. He restores the principal and adds the fifth part more thereto; and gives it to him, to whom it appertaineth. He is thus correcting the wrong done to his fellow-man, as far as is possible. A man can not be truly penitent, and retain in his possession that which of right belongs to his neighbor. The addition of a fifth part more to the original sum would be a sufficient increment among a people, who were not allowed to exact usury of one another. Zaccheus, in the freshness of his new obedience, restored four-fold like a convicted thief; nor

could his conscience be quieted with less; though this law, which we are considering, was framed to meet such cases as his. In cases of restitution, the tendency is to a generous abundance; rather than a bare equivalent. Before God can be approached, the thief must disgorge freely, and beyond the bare amount due.

He, who makes humble confession and full reparation, from the impulse of his own convictions, gives satisfactory evidence of sincere and genuine repentance for the wrong, of which he has been guilty.

The offender described in this statute was then a sincere penitent; but was he forgiven in consideration of his repentance? Human law has no longer a claim against him; nor can it inflict a penalty upon him in anywise. He has made all right with his neighbor, and thus escapes liability at the hand of civil justice; but he has now an account to settle with God, at the bar of divine justice. The stain of sin is upon his soul; the law of God has been violated. One, who had been guilty of the greatest outrage upon his fellow-man, said: "Against thee, even thee only have I sinned; and done this evil in thy sight." Wrong done to man is done against God, whose law is not advice, which a man may take or refuse as he may please. Advice is advice, which no one is under obligation to accept; but law is law, and is violated at peril.

The account with God can be settled with blood only. His forgiveness is not bestowed because the transgressor sincerely repents; but "the priest shall

make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him, for all that he has done sinning therein."

To pardon a transgressor in consideration of his sincere repentance is to abandon the law altogether. When an earthly executive issues a pardon to a criminal proved guilty beyond a doubt, if the evidence has been fairly taken and considered, he is setting aside the law and making it null and void; and doing more to demoralize society, than the guilty criminal has done.

How many regard the law of God as being as flexible as the laws of the country! which Christ declares to stand firmer than the heaven and the earth. He, who disobeys it, rushes upon the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler; casts himself under the wheels of the car, on which the throne of the divine majesty rests; and stands a pronounced rebel against the Holy God, who issues no pardon of transgression, but on the ground of satisfaction to the stern and inflexible law.

The religion of the Bible has demanded the same compliances in all ages: repentance toward God and faith in an atoning Savior. Relaxation of its requirements has never been made, and is impossible. It is the same in all time. All the light to be gathered from the Old Testament on this subject of atonement, is to be found in the consideration of the several steps commanded for the making the required offering.

1. The animal designated for the altar was a lamb of a year old; not yet mature. It was the animal selected on account of its innocence, being

thus a type of the future Redeemer. Unprovided with the weapons of aggression or means of escape, it relies on man for protection; and flees to him for shelter more than any other of the brute creation. The dove has its sharp beak, the cow its formidable horns; but the lamb has only man for its defence. Hence it properly represents innocence.

And then it is unresisting. The bullock, on its way to the altar of God, often became furious at the smell of blood; and resisting with loud bellowings, had to be forced to the fatal spot; but the little lamb willingly followed its master to the bloody altar; and yielded up its life without resistance. This is true of no other animal than the lamb, which was thus a picture of him, who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before its shearers, so, opened he not his mouth."

But the chief reason for its selection was the tie that existed between it and its master. An affection for brutes is not unworthy of humanity. The horse and the dog are often regarded with evident love among the most cultivated nations of the day; they were both forbidden to the Israelite; and the lamb became the recipient of the attachment of a pastoral people, as might be expected.

The animal without blemish and without spot was a privileged inmate of the tent, the playmate of the children, delighting them with its gambols, and partaking with them of their cheer. Possessed of the most delicate auditory provision, it knew the voice of its master; and could never be deceived by any imitation of sound from a stranger; but recog-

nizing his call at all times, bounded to the shepherd, whenever he approached. What a picture of pastoral life is presented in Nathan's parable to David! "The poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which did eat of his meat, and drank of his cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter." No society for the suppression of cruelty to animals was needed among the Israelites; the law of Moses required the greatest kindness to the brutes. "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk," "When thou findest a bird's nest by the way; thou mayest take unto the young; but thou shalt not take unto thee the dam," are instances. The Jew loved his little lamb exceptionally; and therefore God chose it for the animal of sacrifice.

Imagine now the scene at an atonement. Impelled by intolerable remorse, the offender has confessed a crime of long ago; and knowing that God, in order to its forgiveness, requires the sacrifice of a life, takes the perfect animal for a victim. He has to tear it away from the embraces of children; and leads it off amid the weeping farewells of the family. No stain of guilt is upon the lamb; yet it is to die for sin not its own. An innocent being is to suffer in the stead of the guilty. The owner is saying to himself, I am the offender; God might justly require my life; but graciously accepts another life in the place of mine. This substitution became very evident as the ceremony progressed.

Next, the offender was required to confess his sin publicly; while his hand rested on the head of the lamb. All the particulars of the misdeed were

honestly and truly recited; the opportunity, the temptation, the secresy, the inward contest, the final determination, the crime, the subsequent falsehood, and the perjury. Every step was humbly and sorrowfully published: and during the whole of this confession, the hand was on the head of the victim. The little animal by no means threw off its master's hand, which had often fondled and fed it.

The penitent with many tears divulged his guilt, adopting the words of some devotional portion of the word of God: acknowledging that the sword of divine justice might properly cut him down; and that the fire unquenchable of the divine wrath might consume him; but praying that God would accept instead the life being offered. While the words were on his lips, [that God's justice might strike him, and his wrath, like fire consume him.] the knife of the priest struck the unresisting lamb; and it was prepared for the fire. Precisely what the man had confessed might befall himself, befell the lamb. The fire on the altar was the emblem of the eternal fire, having been kindled from heaven in the wilderness, and burning for centuries without extinction. Korah and his company perished for the crime of using other fire, than the fire of God.

Under the guise of this simple ceremony were veiled the great doctrines of imputation and substitution. The laying on of hands was understood to imply that in the act, something was communicated from the principal to the recipient: as when the Holy Ghost was given in the laying on of hands, and as when Jacob blessed the sons of

Joseph by laying on of hands. In this case the guilt, in the sense of liability to punishment, was considered as passing over from the transgressor to the victim: and the lamb, assuming the guilt of the crime, was treated as the offending party.

The actual criminality belongs ever to the culprit himself, and cannot be transferred. Under the administration of Jehovah, the liability to suffering and punishment can be shifted. The phraseology of the Bible is not that our sins were imputed to Christ; but that they were laid upon him: an expression evidently derived from this ceremony and equivalent to imputed. The lamb was regarded as a substitute for the criminal: and could it have spoken, might have said, my dear master I willingly die for thee and in thy stead: thy life is required, and I will surrender mine in place of thine.

As its body quivered in the agonies of death, the transgressor could but feel: this fearful doom I had merited; but God accepts another life in place of the one I have forfeited. As its body was cast into the fire of the altar, the master could but feel, this doom was justly mine; but God has appointed another to endure it in my place. They knew as well as we, that the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin; and that these offerings were but pictures of the great atoning offering to be made in the future. Probably no Jew ever went through this ceremony without tears; to do otherwise than weep seems quite impossible.

This whole ceremony in all its parts was an affecting representation of the work of Jesus Christ,

cut off in his young manhood; slain by men; but offered and consumed in the fire of the divine wrath; and suffering for the sins of man imputed to him, or laid upon him, the sinless one. Such was the only service, by which God could be approached: the only worship he would receive.

It is contained in this delineation of the work of Christ; that he suffered the identical curse which man would have undergone; had the judgment fallen upon him. This is the unquestionable truth. Our Lord was incapable of remorse, despair or selfish rage and fury, which the lost are represented as experiencing; but these are not the penalty of God's law; they are but its adjuncts and results. The dire penalty due to man for his sin, the curse of God Jesus endured: he drank the very cup prepared for us. The very sword, that would have smitten us, smote him; the consuming fire of God's vengeance kindled upon him.

Jesus is called the lamb in the writings of Peter and Paul and John; and no less than twenty-seven times in the one book of Revelation. He is said to bear our sins, which can only mean, that he bore the punishment due to us for our sins; which is the sense of the phrase throughout the books of Moses. His death is called a sacrifice; and we are said to be saved by his blood-shedding and death. To this view agrees the otherwise inexplicable fact of his unparalleled mental suffering.

We learn the depth and intensity of those sufferings from the prodigies which attended his death. The sun had risen as usual, and shone with its

ordinary vernal brightness. No eclipse was possible at the passover moon. The fury of men had done its work; and their victim had been hung amid unexampled insults upon the cross. For three hours taunt and mockery had swept over him like a tempest; but at its meridian height the sun lost its light; until the obscurity was probably like the gloom of a total eclipse; and a pall of mourning overspread the whole land; not from any intervening body cutting off its beams. No mass of obstructing cloud concealed it: it may have been visible in the sky: but for three hours it shed but a faint and deathly glimmer until the victim's death, when it suddenly resumed an unusual glory and splendor. The darkness extended to the southward past the city of Alexandria in Egypt, according to Eusebius; and correspondingly far to the northward, probably past the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, covering the territory reached by the rumor of the wonderful ministry and more wonderful man of Nazareth; thus making the whole of Syria a death chamber for the son of God. It plainly suggested that "either the frame of the world was being dissolved, or the God of nature was suffering."

At the instant of his loud cry and death a groan came from the caverns of the quaking earth, than which was never sound more appalling, resulting from the rending of the mighty ledges of rock on which Jerusalem was built. A rock may be more easily split; but no power that has marked the earth within the age of man could rend a mighty mass across its natural seams and strata. Earth

has felt no such shock since the days of geologic upheaval. "The centurion and they that were with him," men of iron, "feared greatly." The crash must have been louder than ordinary thunder, and far more dire and terrifying.

At the same instant in the temple the grand and heavy veil made of purple and blue and fine-twined linen, the strongest material known, which, according to Josephus, was sixty feet long and thirty feet high, and of the thickness of the palm of a man's hand, was rent in twain throughout: and the rent began at the top. Scores of human hands in united effort could not have effected it. To the Jews this must have been as conclusive a testimony as if the firmament which hides the throne of God had been rent, revealing the unseen. At the same moment the doors of tombs were wrenched open, and the bones of saints moved on their stony beds.

The sufferings of Christ are the mystery of time, and will be of eternity also. These are the things which the "angels desire to look into." Moses and Elias, direct from the world of glory, talked with the Master "of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;" it was the one absorbing topic in that bright world whence they had come. One scene will stand fresh as yesterday in the memory of saints and angels to all eternity, the scene of Calvary.

The tragedy which opened with such a storm of pitiless cruelty and abuse, ended in the terror of its promoters. The centurion in charge felt that these

portents were connected with the death of the sinless one, as did also a multitude who returned from the scene, smiting on their breasts. The agony which produced the death sweat in Gethsemane prevailed with intensified force during the hours of darkness, and at length ruptured the walls of the aching heart and ended the life. In the few instances in which a distant resemblance has been observed to this sweat of blood, death has immediately supervened. The Savior's strength had been reinforced by angelic ministration, and his life prolonged until he could say, "It is finished."

Nature sympathizes with God only. When the soul of a man is crushed with grief, the body, the only matter over which it has complete control, trembles, weeps, faints or is convulsed. When Jesus died nature responded in sympathy with signs unmistakable. Earth felt the wound with a shudder of convulsion, and the eye of day closed in a gloom akin to night. This spasm of nature conveyed no description unwarranted by the fact. It but feebly expressed the horror of the deed.

The cross throws a new light on the character of our God: and demonstrates the tenderness of his love. Love is shown to be the essence of his divinity, the impulsive power of his nature, the soul of his attributes, the true inwardness of his being. Mercy is love in the most soul-subduing form the human mind can conceive. Wonder at the infinities of his nature, the immensity of his works, and at his illimitable presence, ceases; the whole soul is absorbed in the greater wonder of his love.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ might have been accomplished secretly, unwitnessed by the testimony which the world possesses; but then the race would lack the evidence that he had triumphed; that his sufferings entered into his original plan; and that his enemies by inflicting them had but fulfilled his own intention. His career would have ended in unmitigated ignominy and gloom. There would have been evidence sufficient of his resurrection from the dead, if no exhibition of his resurrected person had been afforded. He had died seemingly under the frown of heaven, and his previously imper-
turbable composure had forsaken him. The cloud hung over him and deepened and thickened to the last, when he complained that God had forsaken him. The hopes of his disciples went out with his life, and when he gave up the ghost their expectations perished.

Though his atoning work was complete, and could derive no additional efficacy from his open resurrection; though it might have occurred in a manner eluding the scrutiny of man; yet it pleased him to give his followers a glimpse of his triumph through witnesses chosen before of God: even this the world did not deserve, much as it needed it.

I. He was truly dead. When it became necessary to accelerate the death of a crucified wretch, it was not permitted by Roman custom to kill him outright, and thus put him out of his misery, as would be done in christian lands; but their cruelty protracted his sufferings as long as possible. The legs of the malefactors were broken above and below the knee, but the soldiers agreed that Jesus was already dead. The drooping head deep sunk upon his motionless bosom, the set and staring eyes, the gaping mouth, the pendulous body with knees thrust forward, and sustained entirely upon the pierced hands satisfied them that life had departed. One of them however, to make assurance doubly sure, buried his spear-head in his shrunken and unprotected side, piercing it to the heart, Had a spark of life remained this wound of itself had been fatal.

II. His body was mangled beyond the possibility of resuscitation. It is considered as demonstrated that the immediate physical cause of his decease was rupture of the heart. This alone would preclude all chance for the restoration of life. In addition there was a cut in the diaphragen of from four to six inches in length making an aperture

sufficient to admit a man's hand: this destroyed all possibility of renewed respiration, this function depending upon an air-tight chest.

Besides these two effectual obstacles to reanimation a third equally forbidding existed in the condition of the blood. The intensity of mental anguish and horror had produced strange derangement in the blood even in Gethsemane. Mental anguish had threatened life even then, and would have destroyed it, had it not been for the ministration of the angel. That extreme mental agony has a like effect in ordinary cases has never been ascertained, investigation never having been made in this line of research. In the case of Jesus the blood was already coagulated as soon as he died, this result not taking place usually under twenty-four hours after decease. The loss of blood may have been sufficient to destroy life; but if not, the remaining supply was not of normal character, being no better than water, having utterly lost its vitalizing qualities: and to all intents the body was a wholly bloodless corpse. If a drop remained in its veins it could be only as a germ of decay. Probably every drop was lost.

These three conditions existed in the body of Jesus, any one of which was sufficient to make the hope of its revivification in any natural way an absurdity. Any human body that was ever consigned to the tomb was a subject more likely to be restored to life than the body of the crucified Jesus. True not a bone was broken; but his mangled remains were beyond the reach of any power to re-

adjust, and restore to life beneath the power of the Most High God, which can create something out of nothing.

III. The body had been safely deposited. "He made his grave with the rich (singular) in his death." Near the place of his execution was a new sepulchre, in which no body had yet been laid, hewn out of the solid rock, and embowered in a garden; there was no other tomb in the vicinity. Joseph of Arimathea lately become a resident of the holy city, had prepared it for himself and family. It was a costly tomb, and attractive in its surroundings.

Here Joseph himself bestowed the corpse wrapped in linen cloths, with spices enveloping it on every side. The common mode of preparing a body was to enswathe each limb with its spices in linen wrappings, and afterwards similarly to wrap the whole in one case. For the lack of time a bed of spices had been made upon the floor of the tomb, the body laid upon it, and covered with spices, and the whole mass enswathed with a long sheet of linen.

After such a burial a "very great" stone had been rolled against the opening; as the tomb lacked the door which would have completed the work.

The enemies of the Nazarene "the rulers" were satisfied with the place: it could be made perfectly safe. They were not desirous of removing the corpse: but by the governor's permission, in order to prevent any scheme of fraud on the part of the disciples, they surrounded the spot with a file of Roman soldiers, after examining and being satisfied that

the tomb actually contained the body. They also sealed the stone with the great seal of the state, the breaking of which was punishable at their will, making the body a state prisoner. His own tomb thus sealed and stamped Joseph himself could not enter.

These men remembered well our Lord's prediction of his resurrection. They knew the importance of preventing imposition, and were resolved that it should not be practiced; being aware that putting him to death was worse than in vain, if he should arise from the dead, or if it were generally believed that he did. So well did they know this, that they spent the Sabbath in perfecting their arrangements. It was their evident intention to produce the dead body on the third day, to heap fresh insults upon the lifeless clay, and perhaps drag it through the streets of Jerusalem, and cast it out to their Gehenna, or to the beasts of the field and fowls of the air. This production of the corpse appeared to them necessary for their justification in the eyes of many of the people, who had perhaps inwardly shuddered at what had occurred, as well as for their own satisfaction; for there was still a possibility that he might prove to have been the Christ. All that could be done to guard and preserve it was done.

III. Yet on the third day the body was gone: and they accused the disciples of stealing it, while these declared that their master had risen from the dead. Now if the rulers had known certainly that these eleven men had stolen the body, their enmity against them would have been a thousand fold more

severe than it had been against him. The rulers were men exasperated to the highest degree of passion, more fierce than ravening wolves, having the bulk of the nation in sympathy with them, and the power in their hands. Eleven of their subjects without influence or friends break the state seal, steal the most important deposit that seal ever guarded, charge upon their rulers the commission of the most heinous crime ever perpetrated on earth, and what comes? Certainly a worse fate than crucifixion. Woe to the daring wretches who array themselves against the desperation of a company of infuriated tyrants with power in their hands, and the nation encouraging them. A ten-fold fiercer attack will overtake them. But no such result follows.

The enemies commenced their assault with an impetuosity that broke over every obstacle; but in the midst of their career, when their work was but half done, they pause, refrain, adopt milder counsels, suffer themselves to be stigmatized with guilt that lacks a name, and cower before their own weak and defenseless subjects. Did ever wild beast stung to uncontrollable fury, and dashing at his opponent with his glaring eye full upon him, pause in his headlong course, stagger, and decline the fight, unless he had received his mortal wound? Let the lion make his onset, get one taste of blood, and he is at once irresistible; he will assuredly complete his begun work of destruction. If he retreats, he has received his death wound.

Between the tone of the rulers toward Jesus Christ and their tone toward his infinitely more ob-

noxious disciples a few days later, there is an immense difference. At one time it was "his blood be on us and on our children," and soon after it was "Refrain from these men; if this counsel and work be of God ye cannot overthrow it," a sentiment unanimous with them. Ah! they had met with that which made them pause, and suggested moderation. The awful prodigies attending the crucifixion made them shudder, but did not daunt them. They still deliberately took their measures, and pursued them. Something more appalling still to them had taken place. The prison doors of the grave its everlasting doors had given way, and the conqueror had risen; the bonds of death forming as slight an obstacle in the way of his resurrection as did the weapons of the guard: and they stood like a ruffian who has dealt one blow upon his unresisting victim, and raised his hand to finish the work of death by another; but that hand, instead of descending in power, falls nerveless, and the sword drops out of its clutches.

The priests never publicly charged the disciples with the theft even when arraigned before them for judgment, and do not even allude to it. The story of the soldiers bears the marks of falsehood upon its face, as they professed to have slept during a "very great earthquake," of which disturbance the tomb was the center; a disturbance sufficient to awaken every sleeper in the city and adjacent villages. It did actually awaken Mary Magdalene and her companions, who had lodged outside the city in some village near, possibly, Bethany. The word

used by the three synoptists is "she came" to the tomb from without the city. That the rulers made no attempt to secure the punishment of the soldiers for this breach of military law proves them unbelievers in their own version of the affair.

V. The eleven disciples were incapable of executing such a scheme. The tale of their enemies charges them not only with the rescue of the body, but with devising and propagating the whole system of Christianity; and that, too, "beginning at Jerusalem." Now these men, and they are to be believed when they testify against themselves, so far from deceiving others did not themselves believe that their master would actually rise from the dead. They "were offended because of him," and debated in their hearts whether he were not a mere human though highly gifted leader, and himself deceived as to his own pretensions. They were through fear not present for any length of time at his crucifixion: but one of them saw him die.

All proved traitors to him. After his death they were afraid to be seen together in a body in the streets of the city; and when they met, it was by stealth and behind a locked door and by night. They were so oppressed by a criminal disbelief, that while the announcement of the soldiers convinced the priests of his resurrection, the testimony of those who had seen him did not convince them. In losing Jesus they had lost all; their fond expectations had vanished; grief had settled in paralyzing stupor upon their souls; and Satan filled their hearts with the direst temptations.

As they believed, the corpse was in the custody of friends; and would ever continue to be an infallible reminder of their own vain hopes, and crushing disappointment. They did not appreciate the indescribably mighty interests that centered around and depended upon that helpless clay; and took no steps even to preserve it from being cast out. As his memory could never be obliterated from their minds, every relic of their former guide would be precious: but they were too completely stunned even to remember, to plan, or as much as to take thought.

Now the story of the priests charges these men as the sole authors of Christianity, with plotting and devising for forty days in Jerusalem the boldest imposture ever conceived, and beguiling the whole world with it. Other impostors have invariably laid their schemes, and felt out their way in times of settled indifference concerning them. While the world was still, careless and off its guard, they have laid deep their well-digested plans, and prepared their imposture. But in the case under consideration, in the short space of forty days the scheme of Christianity was devised, and in the keen sunlight of hostile publicity. And when it was born, and the woman was ready to be delivered of a man-child, who should rule the nations with a rod of iron; before her stood watching the great dragon, ready to devour the fruit of her womb as soon as it should appear. And had it been the result of mere human invention, it would have been destroyed

as soon as it saw the light. How was it that it was born, in the face of the dragon, and there lived and grew to its great destiny?

The assumptions of the papacy were gradual and had the consent of all parties. Mahomet's system was matured amidst the indifference of the world, and spread only because political alliance gave it an introduction. But can it be supposed that honest and simple-hearted men, who had been the dupes of the greatest of impostors, should in the hour when keen disappointment palsied their souls, conspire together to invent a scheme of deception, and impose it on the world? No. If their master were a deceiver, they were the greatest dupes, the most injured of all, and in their absolute discomfiture they had lost the power to invent, and the heart to engage in any public effort. That there should be no discrepancy in the statements of eleven men, and no treachery among them is incredible.

Their speech and conduct are such as belong only to honesty, sincerity and conviction. They accuse themselves of the basest cowardice and treachery in the face of repeated professions of attachment; they acknowledge an unbelief as stubborn as the wilful blindness of the rulers; they admit that fears had overwhelmed them altogether, and had intimidated them to the forgetfulness of every obligation. They confess that their minds were filled with direful temptations and doubts of their master, which clung to them with the tenacity which the temptations of Satan alone possess over souls

dispirited, crushed and on the verge of despair. They had been afraid to follow him to Jerusalem on his last journey thither, and had gone with misgivings; their fears had yielded, and expectations had arisen that his great promises of a kingdom might at last be realized; but this last prop of their faith was gone; the huge waves and billows of fear had gone over them, and the sea of unbelief had swallowed them up.

Their testimony to the resurrection of Jesus was offered amidst tears of the most sincere compunction. Themselves they accused as bitterly as they condemned the enemies of their master. It were easier for them to die by violence than to suppress the truth which they had been base enough to betray, and which the world rejected. They were bolder in acknowledging the truth in consequence of their former cowardice and in proportion to it.

VI. Let the change in the feelings and conduct of these simple-minded men be considered. From the day of the Pentecost more courageous men were never seen. They exhibited a bravery far superior to the physical courage of Alexander, Cesar or Bonapart.

All the vaunted captains of this bloody earth fail in the exhibition of an equal heroism. Luther at Worms has admirers throughout the christian world; but Luther had strong supporters, and he knew it. The complexion of political affairs was such as to favor him, and render the emperor less hasty in obliging the pope. Even Luther's peril

was far beneath that in which the apostles stood, unlearned and ignorant men literally facing a frowning world.

What could have elevated them from their extreme depression of cowardice to the sublimest heroism but the certain knowledge that their Lord had arisen from the dead? Their conduct shows the sincerity of full conviction and absolute knowledge. Their courage is more admirable from its tenderness, and thereby enforces conviction that the truth was with them, as they are heard addressing the murderers of their Lord and master as "brethren."

They had no earthly motive urging them to their chosen course. They sought not wealth; for when money was laid at their feet in piles, they showed that they would not stoop to pick it up for themselves. They sought not authority and command; for they might, if so disposed like Roman bishops, have aggrandized themselves more than other mortals have ever done: but none of these things moved them. They sought martyrdom and they found it: they drank of the cup of which their Lord had drunk, and were baptized with his baptism. Unlike impostors they courted investigation, and asserted the truth just where it could be demonstrated to be untrue, if that were possible; and established it in the very city in which earth and hell had combined to crush it.

VII. His resurrection from the dead is the most wonderful event of his wonderful history. When he was born there were wonders in the sky and on the earth. When he entered upon his ministry fresh

wonders marked the period. Every day of the ministry added to the catalogue of marvels, which had aroused and electrified the nation. But none of them compares with the scene at the tomb on the morning of the third day. His resurrection from the dead was the greatest miracle ever wrought on this earth, of which a human body was the subject.

The tale of the Roman guard abundantly confirms the history of the evangelists. According to their story the fourth watch of the night had come, and all was well. A new quaternion of sentinels had been posted to complete the remaining hours of duty, from 3 to 6 A. M. The hour of the deepest silence of the night had arrived, and idlers from curiosity had scattered away. The first faint streaks of light were beginning to show in the east, when suddenly they fell under the influence of a spell which they were wholly unable to resist; they became motionless in their tracks, incapable of joining one another in order to act together; incapable of speech or outcry; indeed they breathed with the greatest difficulty; it was impossible to say how long the spell lasted, but the time seemed long; and had it been longer they would all have been dead men. Had a whole cohort of soldiers been present they could have done nothing. They saw nothing of what passed within the rocky walls, and saw no living form emerge from it. After a seemingly long season, during which they breathed with the greatest difficulty and stood petrified the spell was broken, and the increasing light revealed the fact that the tomb was empty, and needed no further guard.

Its occupant was gone, veiled in the mantle of invisibility; all natural laws yielding to his convenience.

It is not necessary to suppose that the properties of the matter composing the body of the Christ underwent any change of nature by its resurrection. Too great a change of properties would indicate a change of substance: it was still gross and earthly, and identical with that deposited in the sepulchre. Its alternate visibility and invisibility, and its instantaneous transit from place to place must be accounted special miracles. It is not necessary to believe that being flesh and bone it passed through solid matter as a closed door: being invisible it probably entered unperceived when the door was opened for another.

It must be borne in mind that the resurrection took place without the closing or the healing of any of the wounds. The heart was still in its ruptured condition: it lay a disabled engine; the chest, which by its alternating action inhales the fuel for the internal fire and exhales the ash, lay with its pierced and gashed diaphragm like a broken cylinder; the blood, which visits every portion of the frame removing the waste and supplying the fresh material, and is properly the life of the whole, was wholly lacking: and the body was a total wreck. Yet without the closing of a wound, or the correction of an abnormal condition it was re-endued with life. To the human understanding it seems as possible for God to speak life into a mass of inorganic matter, or a statue as into a body whose intricate ma-

achinery was so deranged, and the connection of the various parts for harmonious working was so dissolved, and not readjusted.

In the entire absence of blood from the person, no heart was longer needed for its propulsion through the system, nor were lungs longer required for its aeration, indeed respiration itself was no more necessary, but was carried on at will, and as occasion demanded.

So inspiration speaks of it as displaying the power of God in the highest degree, and as showing "the exceeding greatness of his power." In the resurrected body of Jesus life did not depend upon the ingenious and effective arrangement of the vital forces as in men, but upon its continued and inseparable union with that Being who is "Life" in its essence, infinite, inexhaustible and eternal. "It was impossible that he should be holden of death." This resurrection of the Christ is a demonstration of God's ability to reproduce any and every human body that has ever lived, as he can endue with life a clod of clay or a heap of dust, and call things that are not, and they are.

The ascended body of the Lord still bears the gaping wounds, still carries the deranged conditions just as they were when it was laid in the tomb. Great tufts are missing from the beard, torn out by violence and from the roots; marks of the thorny crown may still be on the brow, and long furrows ploughed upon his back by the cruel scourge may possibly yet be traced. Every lesion received during

the passion left its indelible imprint upon his person, to be a study and a wonder in the distant ages of the future. Rev. v:1. John says: "I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts and of the four and twenty elders a lamb as it had been slain." He carries the fresh marks of slaughter in heaven, and his appearance may remain unchanged throughout eternity.

The eleven disciples and their associates had all the evidence of the real, bodily presence of Jesus with them, that any of us have of the presence of our friends. The proof was of the same kind that convinces us all of the existence of an external world, and of other beings beside ourselves. It is generally considered to be an actual demonstration. The identification of the person was complete; the five open wounds determined that point. Their senses were perfectly satisfied, as they came into direct personal contact with him. They were challenged to examine his hands, his feet and his side, a permission of which they undoubtedly availed themselves at once. Every facility of investigation was granted until unbelief itself upon its knees confessed, "my Lord and my God."

Their minds were convinced as they listened with burning hearts to him "who spake as never man spake." The only addition to this testimony that can possibly be suggested relates to the number of witnesses privileged to receive it. It was in the power of our Lord to overwhelm his rejectors by the open, undeniable display of his risen person; but such was never his method. Such procedure would

have left no room for the exercise of faith. Faith in God's testimony is the regenerating factor in the human soul. God demands a degree of receptivity in the minds of those to whom he appeals by the statement of simple truth. He is not seeking a compulsory conviction. To believers God will grant the full assurance of conviction. "To him that hath shall be given," as these disciples had absolute certainty.

CHAPTER IX.

RESURRECTION OF JESUS. THE WITNESSES.

That the risen Savior should be exhibited before only a limited number of witnesses is in accordance with his method in all his mighty works. They were most of them performed in the absence of the crowd. Two or three witnesses are the stipulated number as sufficient to establish any fact by testimony. Our Lord suffered more spectators when it was unavoidable, but evidently preferred the presence of fewer. It was not to be expected that he would show himself before those whose accusations he would not answer by the slightest notice, and who blinded their own eyes against the most potent light. The certainty of his resurrection was admitted by his friends only after the most cautious and hesitating examination. Let the witnesses be heard.

The first was Mary Magdalene. It is plain that an excited imagination had nothing to do with the appearance of her lost master, for she anticipated no such occurrence, and her fancy was not busy with the thought of seeing him. The idea of a resurrection was not in her mind at all. She had come with others to complete the burial arrangements by swathing first the limbs separately, and afterwards the whole frame in linen cloths filled with pulverized spices and ointments. None of the ordinary attendants of a decent interment had been allowed. Her woman's heart demanded the tenderest care of the dead, and that nothing should be omitted which could gratify their sympathy and love, that their leave-taking might be enjoyed in all the luxury of Oriental grief expressed in the loud and piteous wailings of broken hearts.

She is spoken of as a person of character and influence and seems to have been rather a leader among the women who followed Jesus: at least her name in every instance is mentioned first when several women are named; and this notwithstanding her previous life of vice in which also she had been a leader.

She undoubtedly possessed the qualities which would have given her the lead in any company in which she might have moved.

The Niagara river above the falls has a suck for two or three miles above the cataract that dooms everything, man or beast, that falls into the stream, there being no possibility of rescue or es-

cape. Hell has a suck of farther reach. She had been in the suck, and had been carried by it to the very brow of the mighty cataract and had looked into the pit which was waiting to engulf her. Jesus had taken her as a brand from the eternal burnings. She was capable of an intensity of love and it was centred on Jesus.

No better or more trustworthy witness could have been selected, for she was a woman of a splendid and uncommon type.

Her conduct compares favorably with that of the other women when addressed by an angel. The other band of women, thrown into a flutter of fear, fled precipitately. Mary was not in the least disturbed, but responded in as cool and self-possessed a manner as if addressed by a mortal.

Her conduct also contrasts to her advantage with that of the eleven men when first face to face with their risen Lord, though they had been prepared for the meeting by the testimony not only of the women, but by that of the two disciples returned from Emmaus, and also by that of Peter, fresh from his presence. Yet when he stood in their midst with his ordinary salutation "peace be unto you," "they were terrified and affrighted." She was seemingly a stranger to fear. Courage is not confined to the sterner sex. Women, soldiers by stealth, have participated in the bloodiest battles, and unflinchingly exposed themselves to the gravest personal dangers, rivaling the bravest men. Such was Mary Magdalene. She had in her the stuff of which heroes are made; and with this heart of iron she

united a most affectionate disposition. A stern superiority to fear, and a capacity for the tenderest affection are sometimes not often conjoined in the same character. Indeed reckless love had been her soul's undoing. At the outset of her career, perhaps more sinned against than sinning, she had taken a fearful revenge upon society; but a woman's heart never beat more warmly in a female breast than in hers. Her attempt to clasp her risen master in her arms when first recognized, was characteristic of the person, and shows how utterly devoid of superstitious fear she was.

Unequaled power of fascination combined with youth, wit, beauty, high spirits and a daring recklessness of disposition had made her a potent factor in the hands of the great adversary of souls; until she had come to take a fiendish delight in her success in the ruin of purity and virtue in those of her own sex, as well as of the other. Like Satan she triumphed in the propagation of evil, until she merited the description of a seven-fold possession; a phrase to be interpreted figuratively, as it was undeniably so used by the Master at least once, Matt. xii:43-45. She gloated over the ruin she had wrought, a work in which she had been seven-fold more successful. But a more finely constituted nature originally is not often found; she had the qualities which could have made her an extraordinarily superior woman; but which, when debased and devoted to the propagation of evil, enabled her to accomplish a vast deal. With the fascinating power of the serpent, she united the malice of the old serpent, whose willing tool she ever was.

The Lord, the infallible judge, has given her the high preeminence of being the first witness of the most amazing event in the world's history; and her testimony is equivalent to that of the strongest minded man, as she was exceptionally cool and self-possessed at the time, and anticipated no such occurrence as actually took place. The church has always believed that she was the penitent woman in the house of Simon at Nain, because her name first enters the history at that point; yet with some mixture of doubt, arising from the statement that she had been possessed by seven devils.

II. The twelve apostles were witnesses. These were naturally gifted men; each preeminently fitted for the arduous work which he afterward accomplished. They stand on the same elevation with prophets of the old dispensation, with equal authority as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, etc. The two bodies, prophets and apostles, form twin constellations in the same sky. The names of the twelve apostles stand inscribed on the twelve courses in the foundation of the city of God, the new Jerusalem. Rev. xxi:14. They are men for all time, and representative men. Peter stands for the impulsive class. His name stands engraved by the finger of God on the foundation of jasper, a stone of blood-red color, streaked with patches of white, perhaps emblematical of the ardent, impetuous, loving class; Andrew, who shows how faith in Jesus strengthens and purifies the ties of nature; James, son of Zebedee, president of the first Christian council; John, his brother, a philosopher by nature; Bartholomew, supposed to

be identical with Nathanael, a man "without guile," enemy of all duplicity; Matthew, the accurate accountant and business man; James the less, surnamed in Jerusalem "The Just," author of an epistle, a wholly practical man; Philip, whose name occurs in the history of the acts, ardent, zealous and a man of strong affections; Thomas, the doubter and a pessimist; Jude, whose remaining scrap shows him an enemy of formalism and hypocrisy; Simon, the Canaanite, a political reformer; Lebbens, of whom nothing is known beside the name; Judas Iscariot, an ambitious schemer, but one of the strongest witnesses for his master's innocence and truth. These were unlearned and common men, the learning of the day being superficial and misleading.

A jury of twelve good men and true, familiar with all the testimony in any case, and able to agree unanimously in a verdict according to the best of their knowledge and belief, is considered competent to determine authoritatively any question of fact. On this matter of the resurrection of their master, they must be allowed to be impartial judges, for all were previously inclined to an adverse decision. Instead of being ready to grasp at, and embrace the idea of his veritable return to life, they all repelled and rejected the announcement without inquiry or examination.

These disciples had been "offended because of him," scandalized by the sufferings he had been made to undergo, which they were not able to understand or interpret; and they had been tempted to renounce him utterly.

In the defense of the righteous God had shut the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, opened the sea for a way of escape, while it drowned their pursuers, protected his prophets by chariots of fire and horses of fire, and if his servants had been abandoned to martyrdom like the three Hebrew children, the angel of the covenant had stood with them in the furnace, and made them more than conquerors.

In the case of Jesus all this had been reversed. His sufferings are the greatest anomaly in all history. That the only sinless being in the whole course of time should die accursed of God, forsaken, killed by sheer agony to which the torture of the cross was not to be compared, was to them inexplicable, and calculated to distract their minds with the most painful doubts of their master: and Satan was busy with his sieve.

The sufferings of Jesus can never be interpreted, until they are understood to have been vicarious, and inflicted by the great ruler whose alone it is to punish sin. All that was by the rage of man inflicted was as nothing compared with the anguish revealed in his dying cry "Eli, Eli lama, sabach-thani." It is not astonishing that the disciples were bewildered. That each one had at least as firm a conviction of the immaculate innocence and divine purity of their lord and master as Judas possessed, will not be questioned: and his fate seemed to contradict the conception of a just and holy ruler of the universe, who presided over the affairs of men.

Never had men been more dazed by an adverse issue of events than these men by the death of their master; the torpor of their memory and their mental faculties proves that the blow received by them had been a killing one. All had lost hope so far as not to be willing to listen to any report favorable to their former fond anticipations: one had seemingly forsaken the company of his fellows, and they had forgotten about the third day as being the decisive day of determination, when the sun, long hidden behind clouds of Tartarean density, should again show himself master of the sky. Two of their company were found upon the road upon that day on business not urgent.

Considerations of their own safety occupied their minds; their leader had been executed as an enemy to the government, and their own arrest had been contemplated as accomplices; a class for whom in that day there was no prospect of lenient treatment, and the apprehension of danger was a powerful incitement to them to avoid further complications.

They must have learned that the sepulchre had been placed under military guard until the third day had been passed. The removal of the massive stone, dispersion of the guard and the disappearance of the body demonstrated the presence on the scene of a superior force. It was impossible to conceive of any human party that could possibly feel a desire to get possession of the corpse of a crucified malefactor. The conclusion seemed inevitable that a divine intervention had taken place. The disciples

would have perceived this, had not fear paralyzed their souls. That they were painfully apprehensive is evident from the fact of their assembling for the evening meal with the doors locked "for fear of the Jews." But appearances were well calculated to bring to mind the predictions of a resurrection, which they had so often heard.

Now let the reaction in the minds of these men be considered. All at once they are aroused from their lethargy, and become bolder than lions. The mighty captains of this bloody earth none of them exceed them in the display of the loftiest courage, which is the wonder of the ages since. Why should not their word be believed? They give the world not the best of their knowledge and belief, but the assurance of indubitable certainty confirmed by many infallible proofs, such as are the water-marks of the divine sanction; and they sign their verdict not with ink, but with their hearts' best blood. One only escaped martyrdom, and he by miracle, if tradition is to be credited.

Their risen Lord had afforded them evidence of every kind that could be asked by unbelief. He remained on earth for forty days in round numbers, forty-two in fact, being present with them for seven whole days if not more, in which they enjoyed the privilege of seeing, hearing and even handling him, and of examining the wounds of the crucifixion. He ate and drank with them.

His partaking of gross earthly food was a demonstration before their eyes that his body was still gross earthly matter, and that his stomach had

not been touched by the soldier's spear. True, no pulse throbbed in his arteries, no blood coursed in his veins; yet these men had infallible proofs before which every doubt was swept away by irresistible conviction. Their testimony was given at the peril of their lives. And how was it given? The vacillating Peter, in the path of a desolating torrent of opposition, stood like a mighty rock against which the waves of passion dashed only to break; the eleven formed a rampart of adamant.

In their experience during the forty days after the resurrection, the apostles had learned that Jesus when invisible was as really present as at other times. He effected the miracles: he it was who sent instant judgement on Ananias and Sapphina, not suffering a harmless lie upon the lips of any of his professed followers.

This was a most threatening warning to them to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It made the church at once "clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." How could Peter, after having been made the executioner of the death sentence on the falsifiers, himself give false testimony respecting the resurrection, and make himself a worse liar than Ananias, speaking harmful lies in the name of the Lord? and that in the very presence of the master? A lie seems to be more abhorrent to the divine nature than other transgressions, as being the prolific seed of all sin.

But the truth had such possession of these men, and the presence of Jesus was so vividly realized by them as to forbid the temptation to add to or

diminish ought from the straight forward truth; and as we read their words remaining to our day, they seem free from human infirmity, as they are free from human passion entirely. Jesus himself was speaking through them. He made their testimony his own, sanctioning it by signs and wonders and mighty works, such as the wonders of the pentecost and the miracles that followed. The signs enumerated in Mk. xvi:7-8 "In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover," were still occurring when Peter wrote or dictated these words, or they had never been recorded; and they continued to follow during the life-time of the apostles; and they were a continual confirmation of their testimony.

The minds of the apostles were at length disabused of errors which had clung to them during their whole connection with their teacher. They had never realized his actual personality: they believed him to be the Son of God in a sense. Had they known who and what he was, Peter would never have denied him; the disciples had never forsaken him and fled, leaving him alone in the hands of the enemies; they would have contended for the honor of suffering with him, more zealously than they ever contended who should be the greatest in his kingdom. Had they but known that he was "the mighty God, the father of eternity," their conduct had been different. He is commonly designated the second

person of the Godhead. He is not second in power and glory, and his name in some passages stands first in the enumeration of the persons.

He is the executive person, creating all things visible and invisible, Col. L:16: maker of the material universe and of the spiritual, as well, of the angelic "thrones and dominions and principalities and powers." "He is before all things and by him all things consist," he is "upholding all things by the word of his power," Heb. 1:3. Upholding is a far greater exercises of power than creating, being as it were a continued creation. "He was with God" before "one thing was made that was made," "the first and the last, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the ending."

He opens the seals of the book of the divine decrees, and executes them as respects this earth by the ministration of angels.

His humanity impressed his followers more than his divinity did. They knew him to be a man in all respects, sin excepted, suffering human toils, feeling human sympathies, manifesting human moods and passions, joying, grieving, astonished, angered, agonizing, pitying even to tears, and they thought that they understood him.

He was not regarded by them in a true light until his ascension to heaven. As he was blessing them, standing on the eastern slope of Olivet, a new light began to beam from his person, his eyes took on a depth and a flame before unseen, the transfiguration glory began to appear, as he slowly moved away from them towards his throne in the

skies. A new light shone into their souls just then: they were relieved of their false conception of his work. The worldly kingdom, the expectation of which had been born with them, vanished like the unsubstantial fabric of a dream.

It had been like a huge cataract upon each eye, obstructing the view of him in his real character. Minds, that dwarfed his mission to the mere founding of a worldly dynasty, could by no means appreciate the real dignity of his person, and the magnitude of his work. There fell from their eyes as it had been scales, and for the first time they knew him.

When Sir Isaac Newton attempted to verify his newly discovered law of gravitation by applying it to the moon, and sat down to calculate the distance the body should be drawn from a tangential line in one second of time, by a force operating inversely as the square of the distance from the earth, to make it travel in a slightly oval curve around the primary, and began to see that his law would correctly interpret the movements of the satellite, he was so overcome that he had to call in a friend to complete the computation, while he took his bed. The revelation of religious truth, on the contrary, communicates an intensity of joy, which strengthens and enthuses the soul, and stimulates all the spiritual energies. So when these men saw the whole gospel truth in its full-orbed glory, they could no more be silenced by the command of men, than the thunder or the whirlwind could be controlled by the voice of mortals. It is impossible to

believe that these men were the dupes of their own fancy. The record shows at every step an astonishing dullness and slowness of perception and conviction which had their guilty origin in a complete alienation from their leader and Lord, whom they had well nigh given up. Their faith seemed utterly to fail: the extinguished wick still smoked; and that was all; at the very last the new light revealed everything; and the truth lifted them above all hesitation, and filled them with a courage unconquerable.

In considering the apostolic testimony, it is to be remembered that there was a company, many of whom had been familiar with the new movement from its beginning, and adhered still. The number of the names, male and female, was a hundred and twenty. The two who went to Emmaus on the third day were of this party, but neither of them an apostle; yet they were the first among the men to behold the Master's risen form. They as well as their associates had been "offended because of him," i. e., scandalized by the sufferings which he had been made to endure, when it seemed indeed that God had forsaken him. They had been wholly unable to reconcile the treatment which he had received with the superintending providence of a holy and righteous God.

As they slowly walked and reasoned of the tragedy he himself joined them, asking sympathetically the cause of their sadness. He was disguised as a stranger visiting the holy city from abroad in a foreign dress. Mk. xvi:12, "in another form;" his externals were different from the usual.

As to the ordinary dress which Jesus wore, Dr. Edersheim has made a valuable suggestion, that it consisted of five articles, of which each of the four soldiers who took part in the execution took one piece, leaving the fifth to be disposed of by lot. The outfit of an Arab this day consists of five indispensable articles. They can be enumerated with tolerable certainty; they were the inner vesture the "chiton," which in this case was a valuable garment, being without seam and of one piece; the girdle which is one of the principal parts of oriental attire, being twenty feet or more in length, the fabric being of the width of nearly two feet and being doubled lengthwise. It is tightly wound around the body several times, and imparts an incalculable support and strength to the person; the outer coat; and the sandals. These make four necessary articles of apparel. The fifth must have been a head-dress. That this resembled the Arab "kefiyeh" worn at the present day or perhaps was identical with it, is probable. The kefiyeh is a piece of embroidered cloth three or four feet square thrown over the head, and hanging down to the waist behind, being confined in its position by a fillet passing around the head and crossing the forehead just above the eyes. The Savior was blind-folded in the high priest's court, and if he wore such a head-dress, blind-folding could have been effected by throwing the loose hanging portion over his head so as to veil his face; and it could have been done without laying hands on him, and without the use of force. It is quite certain that this kind of head-dress was a part of his ordinary apparel.

He appeared to these two as a Jew from Babylonia probably, a great Jewish centre, clothed in Babylonish apparel, a looseflowing robe and the peculiar Chaldean headdress. The disguise was complete, as the robe added to his apparent stature, and aided in concealing his pierced feet. Their question of surprise at his ignorance is better translated: "Art thou the only stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have taken place there in these days?" and it proves the disguise to have been perfect.

He showed them however from their own scriptures that the abhorrence of the nation, their rejection of him, the unparalleled abuse, and the forsaking by the Father were in accordance with, and in literal fulfillment of the foregoing predictions; and that the grossest barbarities inflicted on him had been expressly named in the prophetic books: the offering of vinegar and gall, the disjointing of his limbs, the piercing of his side, the very words of the mockers, and the frown and forsaking of God. The scripture explanation of his sufferings particularly was made plain, that they were for the sins of the world. This great truth makes "hearts to burn" yet. Arrived at Emmaus they constrained him to abide with them, pleading the lateness of the hour. When the evening meal was prepared, he uninvited took the head of the table, pronounced the blessing in his own inimitable manner, and breaking the bread after his characteristic way, displayed his pierced hands; and they knew him: he however vanished out of their sight without rising from his place.

The movements of the eleven disciples on the memorable first day of the week can easily be made out from hints in the history. They were unquestionably awakened at very early dawn by the shock of earthquake which accompanied the appearance of the angel at the sepulchre. They did not, however, connect it with their master as Mary Magdalene and her companions did: the earthquake at the instant of his decease having been the most remarkable occurrence of the kind in all history, and unmistakably connected with his death. None of them went out in consequence, so far as we know.

By sunrise, or shortly after, they heard the report of the women who had seen him. They doubtless sent out hastily two to the places indicated by the women, where he had shown himself, to investigate and satisfy themselves of the truth. When these messengers returned with the announcement that he was not to be seen there or in the neighborhood, the conclusion was that the women were mistaken, and had deceived themselves. Their report was at once regarded "as idle tales."

It is beyond dispute that the risen Jesus might have entered the guilty city, and have surprised his stricken followers by the sight of his person before they had left their lodging place; but the whole day elapsed first.

The delay was intended to demonstrate the stubbornness of their unbelief, and perhaps that they no longer wished to be associated with his cause. They had not believed the women, nor the two returned from Emmaus, though they knew the

body was missing from the tomb. At the first interview Thomas was not present, but the other disciples had all adopted his policy: "except I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Thomas himself was not more determined in his unbelief than was every man of them. Therefore the Lord shortly challenged them to handle him until their satisfaction was complete; and that the world might know through them the infallible certainty of the great truth.

When the disciples assembled on the evening of the day on which their Lord arose, the demonstrative Peter was ready with the story of an interview with his risen Savior. The impression of the gracious visit still lingered on his features, and there was an immense rebound in his heart. The two returned from Emmaus arrived later, and with souls still burning with the flame of a new revelation, recounted their adventure with the mysterious stranger "neither believed they them." Their account was listened to. In each case the spectre had vanished into thin air, and left no trace behind. He appeared just as angels do, whom no one sees come or go. The matter was thoroughly discussed, and it was agreed, not to recognize an unsubstantial apparition as their risen master, and that no appearance, however resembling him in personal accidents, could be regarded as his resurrected body, unless it was proved to be flesh and bone by actual handling.

They had all adopted the position of Thomas, and decided that they would not believe without evidence that would leave no room for doubt.

Just at this juncture when this conclusion had been reached, the risen Jesus appeared, standing in the open centre of the table which occupied three sides of a square, within reach of every hand; and required them all to handle him to their full conviction and satisfaction, which they did with fear and hesitation. To demonstrate that his body was still gross and earthy, he asked for a portion of the food remaining on the table, and ate it before their eyes. He exercised invisibility at will; but the resurrection had in no respect changed the qualities of the matter composing his frame. His plan was to manifest himself openly to his believing followers (and to no others) until every doubt had vanished. The hostile world had no rights in the case. Also in the internal condition of the sepulchre there must have been something confirmatory. The angel called the attention of the women to the place where the Lord lay, as meriting their inspection. Afterwards the apostle John entered the chamber and "saw and believed." The bed must have been on the floor; as afterwards two angels sat one at the head and the other at the feet where the body had lain. Had it been deposited upon a niche or shelf, such a position would have been impossible. The pulverized spices had been placed upon the rocky floor, an excessively liberal supply, sufficient for the burial of a king,

and being spread out and smoothed, formed a bed on which a large, clean, white sheet of linen was put, with a bundle of bandages for the limbs, which were not used for lack of time; but may have been utilized for a pillow. On this bed the body was placed. When Peter entered the tomb, this remained in its first position just as the Savior left it on arising. He saw the cloths "lying by themselves" on the spicy bed, i. e. without the body: just as the couch would appear from which a man had arisen. The handkerchief which had supported and confined his chin was deposited at the side of the sepulchre. Of the numbers who within a few days confessed him, no one had seen the risen Jesus, but thousands doubtless had visited the tomb, which was a silent but real witness that neither friend nor foe had disturbed the body; but that the sleeper had of his own inherent vigor resumed the life temporarily laid down. The bed bore the perfect impress of his person even to the marks of the wounds, stamped by the ooze issuing from them.

The last testimony to be cited is that of the early church, expressed in the Apostles' Creed. In it the primitive church utters its convictions of the truth as originally received from the apostles. The last clause of this creed reads: "I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Whence did the church obtain this article of faith? Heathen writings are full of disquisitions upon a future state; philosophers uttered volumes about it; but the idea of the resurrection of the body never entered the mind of the boldest speculator of

them all. There is nothing in experience or analogy to suggest it; it is contrary to both reason and experience. The thought of its possibility was never born; no reasonings could ever inspire the slightest anticipation of it. He who dreamed it would have been accounted a madman. The simple announcement of it by Paul set the Athenian Areopagus wild with derision. Haughty reason would even now pronounce it contrary to first principles.

Whence has the Christian world obtained its belief in the resurrection of the body? and that the same, which was sown in God's garden, will reappear in the harvest of the future? It is evidently a matter of pure revelation, undiscoverable by human genius.

This revelation was made when, on the third day after the burial of Jesus, a mighty angel descended like a flaming meteor to the tomb of Joseph, about which God had his guards, as well as the Jewish rulers. Jerusalem was shaken with a "very great earthquake," as his feet touched the ground. "For fear of him, the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." A man paralyzed with fear does not fall to the ground; but stands rigid as a statue, incapable of motion, or cry, and almost of breath. A wave of the angel's hand beckoned the stone away; on which he sat, with eyes flaming with such indignation as heaven felt at the murder of Calvary. His robes were of such white as earth could not soil. As he faced the guard, every eye was riveted on HIM. Had the ground yawned behind them, they would not have known it. They saw only the eyes

of fire. This angel was only the porter; his office was simply to open the door; not to resuscitate the dead. One lay in that tomb, whom it was impossible that death should hold. It is an inexplicable wonder that he died, the lord of life. He laid down his life, and he took it again; he had the power.

He arose as leisurely as men arise from the couch of sleep, unrolled the bandages that wrapped his frame; took off the towel that bound his chin; folded it and laid it by itself apart; left the impress of his body upon the bed of spices, on which it had been deposited; and the ooze of his wounds upon the cloth that had enwrapped him. Without deranging the couch of his repose, and without haste he was gone; and no eye had seen him. The lightnings that burned in the sockets of those spirit eyes, were too threatening to allow attention to the sepulchre, or a look towards any other object. The guards saw nothing else. The great forerunner left the grave a triumphant victor; he broke the path, which all his people shall tread. He left evidences of another life stronger than words. When all was over, the spirit guard faded out of view, and retiring into the sepulchre, showed himself to the friends of Jesus as gentle and tender as he had been terrible to his enemies.

This was revelation or rather demonstration. Let reason pronounce as absurd the idea of the re-gathering of the scattered dust; let her pile up difficulties and impossibilities; the faith of mankind will never waver, Jesus has arisen. The same body

retaining the wounds of the cross, and the gash in the side, only etherealized, came back to a life infinitely above the earthly. It was not a spiritual body until the ascension. This was the great sign, on which our Lord rested his reception; it was the climax of miracle. Mighty as had been his works, they were subordinate and inferior. This exhibited "the exceeding greatness of his power;" by it he was "declared to be the son of God with power."

A doctrine is connected with it. If he died for sin, men are sinners; if he rose from the dead men shall rise; if his body was changed, and he ascended; his people shall follow. Corruption shall be changed into incorruption; weakness, dishonor and shame into glory. As certainly as he was with us in his humiliation and sorrows, shall his people be with him in victory over death and the grave, and in eternal glory. Dying Christian, do terrors surround you? Look up like Stephen, Jesus is bending over you to receive your departing spirit. Church of the living God, art thou in straits and reduced to despair? Jesus still lives; he is in every storm that assails you; and though the waves may threaten to engulf your bark, not a hair of your head shall perish without his permission.

CHAPTER X.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS. VISION THEORY
EXAMINED.

No historical fact is more overwhelmingly demonstrated than the resurrection of our Lord on the third day after his consignment to the tomb. His body had been mangled beyond the possibility of reanimation: the soldier's spear had pierced to the very citadel of life, and opened a channel for the exit of the whole mass of his blood already coagulated in the pericardium: the heart itself was a broken vessel ruptured by excessive grief and intolerable agony. The fiction of a return to life from natural and inexplicable causes is the grossest absurdity ever conceived. It is doubtful if galvanic energy itself, had it been possible to apply it, could ever make a body in this condition even simulate life. No mortal eye beheld the movements of Jesus, within the rocky cell, or saw his form as it issued

from its prison. The soldiers' gaze was monopolized by the threatening aspect of the supernatural being sitting so defiantly upon the stone, which had served for a door. He was indeed a seraph "a burner," and the inward fire flashed through the windows of his countenance, palsying their souls with terror.

When the risen one showed himself to the eleven disciples on the evening of that third day, surprised at the sudden apparition, they thought that they were seeing a spectre: the question in every mind was: is this appearance an illusion or is it our veritable master? All saw him, heard his voice, and shrank from him. When he stretched out his hand toward them and said: "handle me and see; behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," and they hesitatingly and with manifest terror slowly complied, "and yet believed not for joy and wondered," he took a portion of the food which they were eating and ate it before their eyes, before they were fully convinced of his real presence, and that his was not a glorified body, but actual flesh and bone.

The sense of touch is the most useful of the five in correcting the impressions of the eye and ear. As the doubting Thomas realized, eye and ear can convey false impressions; the sense of touch corrects, decides uncertainties, and is in every doubtful case the final arbiter and judge. None hardly appreciate how much is owed to this sense. Eye and ear furnish knowledge of distant objects, but of things immediately around us and accessible, more is learned

from contact than from all other sources. The blind man learns more about the qualities of an object which he can handle, than the seeing man gathers by the boasted sense of sight alone, and in some cases by the aid of touch, eye and ear. These three senses give us all our knowledge of an external world, and we would hardly understand that matter existed at all, were we not endowed with this sense of touch.

When a friend is encountered, and we hear his voice and grasp his hand, we have all the evidence of his real presence that is attainable, and no better proof can be asked or procured. The disciples had this amount of proof that their risen Lord stood before them: more conclusive evidence is inconceivable.

Do actual illusions take place, and to what extent is there liability to deception? is an interesting inquiry; and a few words on this subject may strengthen our belief in the testimony of the apostles. Illusions are of rare occurrence, not one individual in many thousands experiencing them, and in many cases they are the result of disease. The senses of the human organism are almost uniformly reliable, as much so as those of animals. The eyes and ears of beasts and birds seem never defective or deceptive. God has not given us eyes and ears and touch to deceive us. They never deceive unless the system is in an abnormal condition. If the physical organism is deranged, the perceptions may be misleading and their testimony false.

Disease is fruitful of such phenomena: angel visions present themselves around the bed of the dying, ravishing and exquisite music is heard, or friends of the long ago return to encourage and cheer the parting soul. A ministerial friend of the writer endeavored fruitlessly to point out to his sorrowing family a glorious messenger come to conduct him home to heaven, designating the spot in the room where he stood, and the piece of furniture nearest to him, and seemed much disappointed when other eyes failed to discover him. Were such forms real would they not be visible to bystanders? Are they not illusions? In other instances an unpleasant presence seems to haunt the bed of the sufferer, and the request is made and repeated, take away that black man, it is impossible to rest until he is removed.

Both these classes of illusions may owe their origin to diseased conditions of the brain, as do confessedly the fancies of the man suffering with delirium tremens.

Dr. Abernethy, of Scotland, relates the case of a gentleman under his care a high liver, who was afflicted every evening with the visit of an old woman who beat him unmercifully with a cane, until his whole body was sore from her blows. The Doctor dined with him one evening, and noticed his gluttonous eating, and his generous use of liquors at the table. On retiring to another room he endeavored to entertain his patient by conversation on subjects possessing the greatest interest to him, and thus withdraw his attention from the expected

visit of his tormentor, when in spite of all his efforts the patient suddenly sank to the floor in a fit, exclaiming "there she is, there she is:" the old woman was a lusus of his own brain.

Such delusions are produced directly by a deranged condition of the nerves of sensation. To any one in a state of perfect health such experiences are impossible.

It is neither safe nor wise to repudiate as absurd, nor to condemn as vagaries and frauds all cases of supposed apparitions: the sad suicide of Hugh Miller the great Scotch geologist stands as a proof that overwork or excessive study, or the wear of continual worry, by rendering some portion of the brain preternaturally sensitive, may lead to false perceptions clothed with all the power of absolute reality, bringing in their train the most disastrous results.

Luther, with his attention concentrated on one thought, in perfect health but suffering from long confinement in the Wartburg Castle with no outdoor life, became the prey of a disordered imagination, and saw the devil appearing bodily before him. Having no better weapon he assaulted and discomfited him with his inkstand; of course any figure, that could be dissipated and driven away by the dash of an inkstand, was not the devil. It was only his fancy.

Protracted sleeplessness, combined with unremitting excitement and intense worry, is in many instances according to the physicians a chief factor in the production of insanity; and may therefore

be confidently considered as tending to beget hallucinations of all kinds. The only test, which can determine the reality or the falsity of appearances, is the sense of touch; if the subject retains self-possession sufficient to use it.

The pious frauds have been numerous in the Roman church in past ages, but in some exceptional cases have produced lasting results upon the character and life of persons, who afterwards became eminent. The first religious impressions of St. Thomas of Assisi, then a wild and dissipated youth, are said to have been received as he was standing before a life-size figure of the crucified Christ. A voice came from the parted lips of the image exhorting him to reform his life, consecrate his possessions which were large to the church, and devote himself to her service. His conversion seems to have been genuine, as he gave himself and all he had to the work enjoined. St. Theresa had a somewhat similar experience, and became noted for charities and devotion. The end, however, never justifies the means used to accomplish it.

An instance is furnished in the career of Ignatius Loyola, a man of most intense character, who, after long confinement indoors in a monastery, necessary for the healing of wounds received in battle, had his visions, which may have had no origin in fraud, but have been entirely the product of his own heated imagination.

If these visions seemed to be real they must have been hallucinations. Had the appearances been tested by the sense of touch, they might have re-

vealed their true character as either actual or false, and thus have saved the world a vast experience of evil. All the instances referred to may be classed as examples of illusions from a diseased condition of the physical system. Indeed insanity itself, if the position of medical experts is correctly understood, results from a complication of bodily derangements: the spirit of man being subject to no disease except sin, the source of all disorder and woe. Had the visions, to which reference has been made, been seen by others than the subjects of them at the moment of occurrence, or had opportunity been afforded to test the supposed personages speaking or acting, by the sense which God has given us for the purpose of rectifying our impressions of external objects, and correcting the aberrations of the eye or ear, or of both, they had either been proved real, or light and airy as the baseless fabric of a dream.

For such lack of verification the Protestant world has lost faith in all the pretended revelations and visions of Catholic history; without, however, denying that these may have been the experiences of good and Christian persons, proved to be such by the surrender of themselves and all their belongings for the promotion of the welfare of the race, and the service of God. We are wonderfully and also fearfully made. The connection between soul and body is so abstruse, and the mutual inter-influence of the two is so subtle and delicate as to emphasize the necessity of preserving all the adjustments which God has made. If "mens sana" is to

be retained it must be "in corpore sano." Too tight a tension of the strings of the harp risks the breaking of some of them. The line of demarkation between a healthy mentality and insanity is so dim, as to make decision respecting the condition of occasional dupes difficult, and to inculcate on all the necessity of acknowledging only hard and undeniable facts. Man is more susceptible of imposition in religious matters than those of common life; and the devil finds in the world an extensive field for the exercise of all his ingenuity of deception.

In some cases illusions are merely dreams, the sleeper being unaware that he is asleep. The man is yet alive and well known to the writer, now a prominent physician in a western city, who at the age of twenty, after a day's attendance in a country store on a close and sultry day in late summer, was riding at its close out of the little town to spend the night abroad. The road passed an old graveyard within a mile of his destination. His horse was walking leisurely along in the hazy evening; and when the graveyard came in sight, the rider beheld with astonishment a figure come out of the turnstile clad in a shirt reaching nearly to the knees. The figure was a skeleton. The smooth long skull, the cavernous sockets where eyes had once been, the jaws and teeth uncovered by lips and cheeks, and the bony legs, and perfectly articulated feet and toes, were plainly visible and were noted. The spook turned down the road to meet the approaching horseman, who after observing its regular steps for a few moments, in terror wheeled his

horse, at the same time administering a vigorous kick. The sudden spring of the animal awakened him, and he became aware that he had been dreaming. A glance down the road showed that no figure at all was on the highway to obstruct the journey. Had the horse also seen the approaching form, it might have proved conclusively that something real was advancing toward them; but illusions are not shared by any company, but are confined to individuals. There is little doubt that many of the spectres, that have produced fright and terror in days past, have existed only in the imagination of the dreamer.

Many such supposed visions have occurred just as the dreamer was reposing between waking and sleeping, or when he was just waking, and had hardly regained full consciousness; and they all without exception take place in the night. If the power that governs all things permits such communications, and himself sends such messengers, he, in his consummate wisdom, would send them in the clear light of day to mortals whose faculties were all awake.

Suspicion reasonably rests on all vague, inexact and shadowy revelations of the kind made at the times most favorable to imposition from without, and to deception by one's own senses. Col. Gardiner, an English gentleman, a brave military officer and afterwards an eminent christian, believed to the day of his death that at a certain time as he sat nursing by his fire, he saw the once crucified Christ at his side, and heard his upbraiding voice.

His conversion speedily followed. The vision however resulted only from his own excited imagination, and deeply agitated soul; to him it was ever an indisputable reality and had all the effect of a reality. It is explicable without the aid of supernaturalism.

A condition of unconscious sleep accounts for the vision of Brutus on the battlefield of Pharsalia. Sitting alone in his tent with only the dim light of a lamp, while the host around him was wrapped in slumber, he saw the flap of his tent move, and at the opening the well known form of the murdered Cesar appeared. Looking intently at Brutus, and pointing a threatening finger, he simply said: "I will meet you again at Philippi;" and dropped the curtain and was gone. Brutus immediately went out, and demanded of the sentinel pacing his beat before the tent, if any one had passed, or if any footsteps or voice had been heard, and the guard declared that no mortal had come near, or spoken or given any sign of his presence. Brutus considered it a fact that he had been visited by the shade of the great Julius; and though the prediction was verified, and he laid down his life at Philippi, the vision was nothing more than a dream suggested by a troubled conscience; and the naming of the place where the decisive battle was to be fought, was but a coincidence.

Illusions may deceive eyes and ears; but a single touch if allowed would dissipate them. However many may be present in a company the illusion is confined to one: where several perceive the object

at the same time, it is real. The sight of the risen Jesus was shared by several individuals at the same time, all of whom recognized the well known form and voice, and were permitted to handle him, and feel the wounds made in his flesh by the cruel irons.

Perhaps there is a lurking regret in the minds of some that our Lord confined his appearances after his resurrection to so few witnesses, refusing the gratification of sight to his numerous adherents. But it is plain that he advertised to all his followers that any, who desired to see him after his return from the tomb, might enjoy the coveted privilege by resorting at a specified time to a place also specified, a mountain in Galilee, a favorite resort, perhaps the scene of the transfiguration; and in consequence more than five hundred men were gathered there at the day appointed. If women could have enjoyed the occasion, the number in attendance would have been much larger. When the company beheld him what wonder that some doubted, when at the first view of him there were doubters among the eleven? Doubt must have been dissipated, however, when his words were heard, words of victory: "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem"—here where truth has been crushed to earth shall it be established firmer than the heaven and the earth; and from this centre shall it irradiate the world—words of mercy proclaiming forgiveness and salvation to guilty Jerusalem first. It was the same Jesus who prayed "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

After the terrible ordeal of disappointment following disappointment through which his friends had passed, their wits had been sharpened to a keenness of discernment and of suspicious scrutiny, that made every one of them a finished detective, who could not again be deceived. The reality of their master's return to life was a vital point, on which hung all their hopes and the hopes of the world; the one guarantee which God has given of a future immortality, and given to men of all ages. Therefore Jesus submitted himself to the closest examination by his intimate associates, who were competent judges of everything connected with his person, and permitted a convincing view of himself to all who desired it, until unbelief itself exclaimed: "My Lord and my God;" and the world has rested on the assurance, which hereafter can never be questioned. Man is no longer a mere animal valuable only for the brute strength and skill and courage which he possesses: he is an undying spirit. However rugged may be his form and low his condition, he is in actual importance and intrinsic value the equal of angels, and outweighs all material things in preciousness.

The sun's a spark of transient fire
 'Twill fade from out the sky;
 The soul immortal as its sire,
 The soul can never die.

The illusion theory ignores and contradicts the stubborn and fundamental facts of the occurrence, such as the empty sepulchre, the missing corpse, which could not be produced, though left in the

possession of the enemy in an impregnable chamber of rock, under military guard; the orderly disposition of the cloths and handkerchiefs; body snatchers, always acting with haste that forbids attention to such touches of finish, the dispersal of the guard before the time of the watch (sun rise) was out, the more than lion-like boldness of the before timid and wavering disciples, and their irrepressible aggressiveness, while the party of the opposition was cowed by defeat, afraid to enforce their own measures, deterred from harming the apostles by a strong public sentiment which favored them, surrendering their purpose to exterminate Christianity and retreating with the brand upon them of fighting against God. Both parties showed by their behavior that the victory was with the Galilean.

These indisputable facts are the ground work on which rests the judgment of the ages. These facts form a connected chain of events, satisfying thousands cognizant of all the steps in the tragedy, and present there to explore and judge of the localities. Such examination induced multitudes to espouse the cause of the rejected and crucified One at the peril of all that man holds dear. The testimony of those who saw and heard and handled the risen Christ, and ate and drank with him during several days is in an indirect manner the testimony of God himself; the testimony of the human senses in a normal condition being the witness of the Most High.

He does not deceive men with sight and hearing of unrealities. The suggestion of illusions is a mere hypothesis unworthy of the name of a theory; as

they cannot possibly take place to a company, and only occur to individuals, whose experience cannot for a moment merit consideration. Facts, hard facts alone can substantiate the greatest occurrence of time. If the apparition of Jesus were an illusion, so also was his ascension, and indeed it might be claimed that so also was his ministry, so also might be the life of any great man in history, and nothing real would be left to the world.

His presence was with the church until it was fully organized and launched on the turbulent sea of opposition. It belonged to him alone to establish its permanent institutions with authority. He on the day of Pentecost changed the weekly sabbath from the seventh day to the first with an authority equal to that which had at first appointed it. Though the record of his act is lacking, yet we have the statement that his appearances to his eleven were confined to that day, that his ascension took place on the eve of a sabbath, and that the public setting up of his church took place on the Pentecost the first day of the week. This selection of the day was authentative. Notwithstanding the prejudice and superstition in which the seventh day was entrenched, and the resistance of the Jews, Christ's appointment has stood as commemorating an event more signal and important than the creation of the world, the completed work of its redemption.

He settled the two ordinances of christianity, baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost had never been heard of before the Lord's death:

the Lord's supper had been celebrated on the night preceding his arrest; but had not been ordained as a permanent institution until after his resurrection. These arrangements are proof of his resurrection. At the appointed time before that generation had passed, the sign of the son of man in heaven appeared, and all the tribes of the land mourned because of him, when they saw the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Titus saw the sign and acknowledged that he could never have taken the city without his help. He sent his angels with the loud voice of a trumpet, and gathered his elect from the four winds; and not a christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem. The earth shook when Jerusalem fell. There has not been in all history an event that more agitated the world, not the fall of the great Napoleon, not one followed by greater and more important results. It established in the minds of all people the mission of Jesus Christ, gave a mighty impulse to christianity, settled the first day sabbath, and inscribed the fact of his resurrection upon the time register of the world.

“O Galilean thou hast conquered.”

Jesus was virtually with his apostles after his ascension as really as before it; and they soon learned that his invisible and spiritual presence was far more desirable than his presence bodily. He shed forth the mighty influences of the Pentecost, and gave the tongues of fire; he healed the man lame from his mother's womb, just such a sufferer as he had always selected while on earth; sent hot

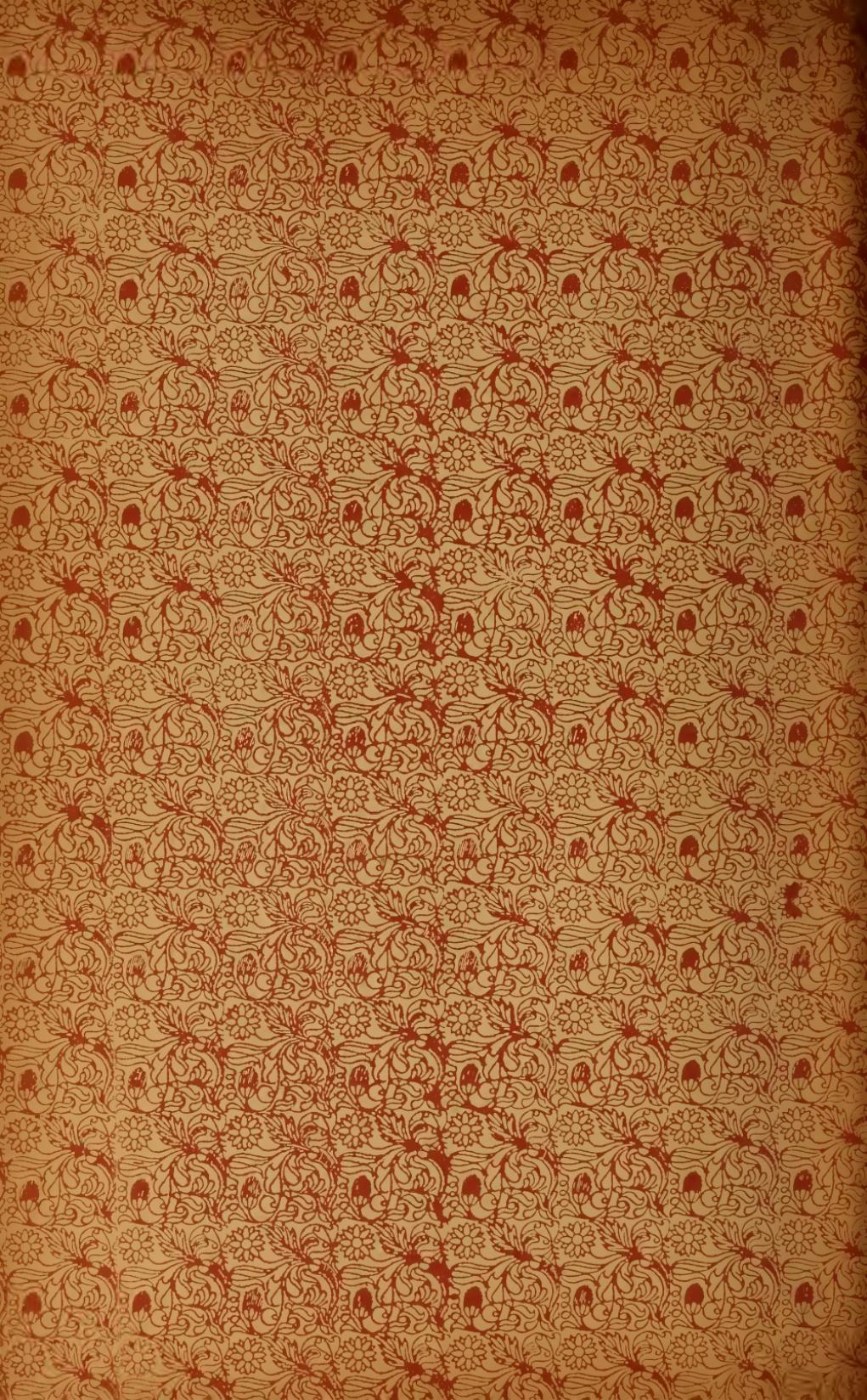
judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, not tolerating among his followers even a harmless lie, but requiring them to stand as true witnesses of the truth, and deterring a host of superficial converts from a merely nominal confession that the truth was with his followers; opened the prison doors and released his apostles, encouraging them to still greater boldness in their testimony; was present at the martyrdom of Stephen to receive his parting spirit, and thrust the iron pricks of truth into the heart of the leader of the mob; sent Philip to teach and baptize the ennuch of Etheopia, and make him the father of the church of Abyssinia, and snatched Philip away immediately that the ennuch might know that it was Jesus himself who had enlightened him, and would still lead him; met Saul on the road to Damascus to change the lion into a lamb, and the persecutor into an apostle. Saul beheld his bodily form as did also John in Patmos.

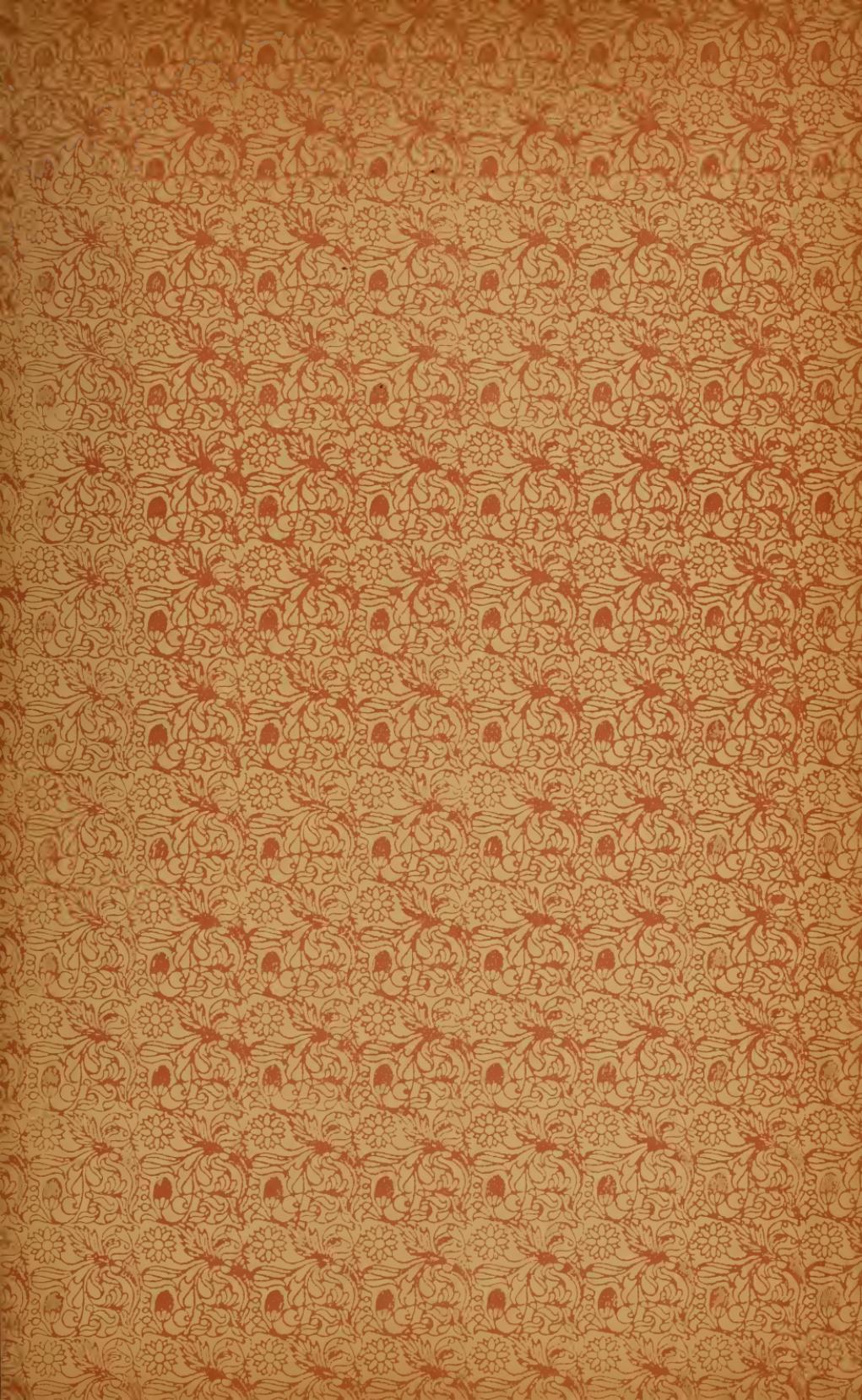
He was in the same manner with all his apostles, directing all the measures taken by them to promote his cause. If the whole were told it would be necessary to quote the whole book of Acts, and the whole history of the church since. He has been in every fire kindled at the stake as really as he was with the three Hebrew children in Nebuchaduezzar's furnace; not indeed delivering them, but walking with them in the flames. Thousands and tens of thousands have been cast to the lions: he has been with each as really as he was with Daniel in the den at Babylon, and they have realized that his spiritual help was more sustaining than could

have been a bodily and material presence. There is not a true convert in any age in any part of the world, with whom he is not present with a sensible, glorious presence. He is with his church to the end of time, and would be present with a greater demonstration if our consecration and sacrifice were more entire, if the fear of man were not in the way, and if an apostolic boldness and enterprise had control of the hearts of his followers. The time may yet come again when he shall visibly interfere to inspire his host and its leaders. "Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." "He is the King of Glory."

ONE COPY REC'D

SEP 30 1898





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 066 131 1